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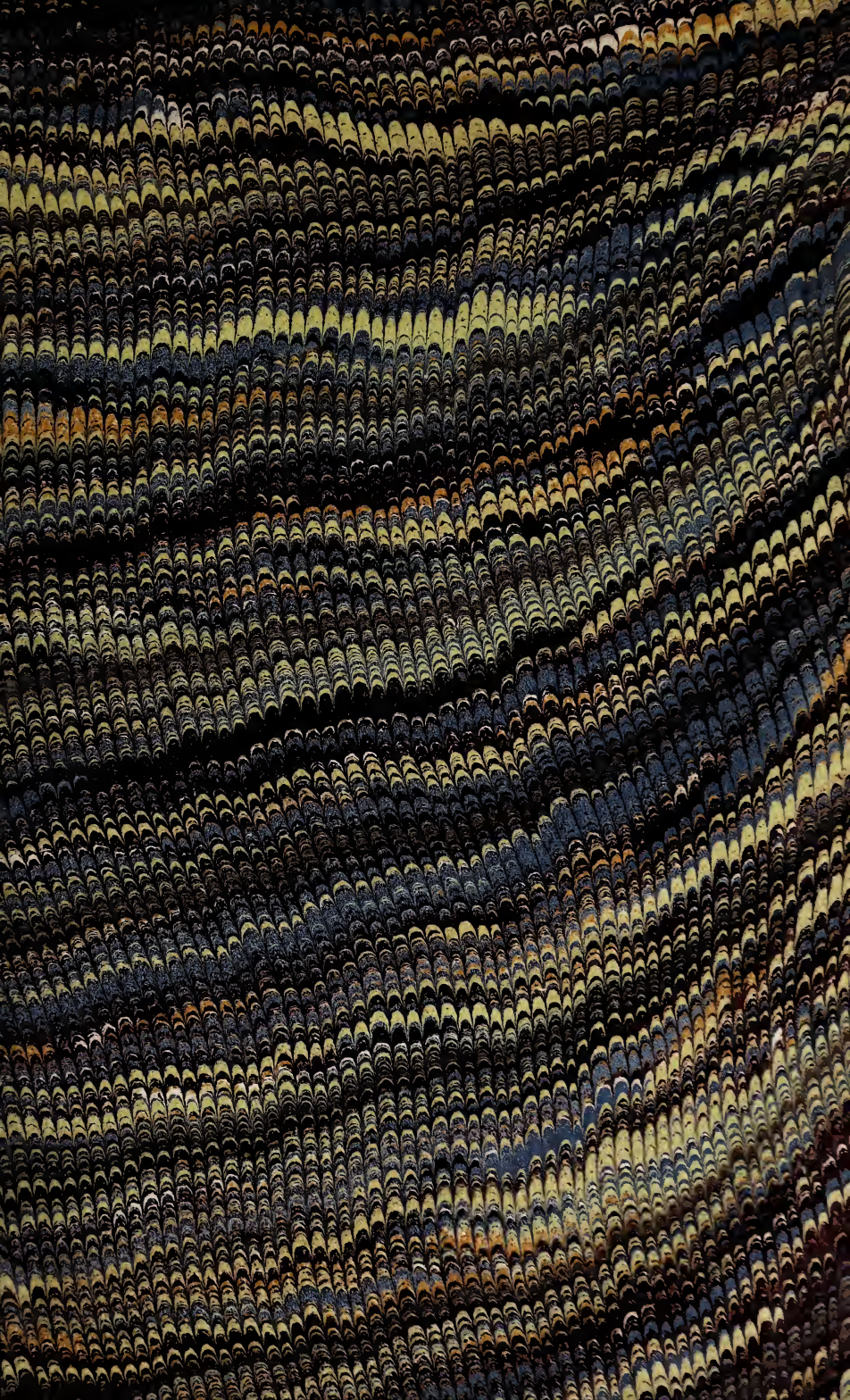
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*Presented to William H. Isaacs*  
*for success in the Advanced Section of the Course of*  
*Instruction in Art.*

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PRIVY COUNCIL ON EDUCATION.  
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PICTORIAL ART

*TYRWHITT*

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Clarendon Press Series



A HANDBOOK OF  
PICTORIAL ART

BY THE

REV. R. ST. JOHN TYRWHITT, M.A.

FORMERLY STUDENT AND TUTOR OF CHRIST CHURCH

*WITH A CHAPTER ON PERSPECTIVE*

BY A. MACDONALD

SCHOOL OF ART, OXFORD

Oxford

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

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## P R E F A C E.

**I**T seems unlikely that any one will expect much original information in a practical treatise on Art, nor have I much to offer; though I trust some fresh information and instruction may be found here and there in this Manual. The main object of this Preface is to render acknowledgment to the various gentlemen by whom I have been assisted, either personally or through written works.

Mr. Ruskin's works are referred to, or quoted, or they have suggested my statements, almost throughout the book. I owe everything to his writings and personal advice and teaching; and I believe his Art instructions form a considerable part of the mental stock-in-trade of most competent painters or critics in our generation.

I have to thank Messrs. Smith and Elder for their kindness in allowing me to make lavish use of his books, and even for supplying me with electro-blocks of some quite unique woodcuts; and I cannot thank them too strongly.

The work of Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle has also been laid largely under contribution; it is probable that its authors were aware in publishing it, that its value as a book of reference would necessarily subject it to extensive quotation. At all events, I have left masses of interesting information behind in it untouched; and

it is a good result of my own work to myself that I have had to read theirs.

But I have to acknowledge that this book could not have appeared at all but for the assistance of Mr. Alexander Macdonald, Master of the Oxford Art School in the Randolph Gallery, Oxford. Its practical part is of course its most important division, and of that, the chapter on Perspective and the greatest part of that on Water-colour are both his. The substance of the first two chapters is derived in great part from his instructions. I have read the whole book to him, and taken his advice on it; and his favourable opinion makes me feel an amount of confidence, in putting it forth, which I should certainly be very far from expressing without his approval. We hope the book may be found a progressive and coherent system of instruction, in which one step may lead properly into another, and the earlier processes or exercises be a consistent preparation for the later and more elaborate ones. The Dissections of Statues, and the Water-colour Landscape in three stages, are Mr. Macdonald's work. Instruction by such means is no new idea<sup>1</sup>; but, I think, in both our examples impersonal teaching is carried almost to the bounds of present possibility.

Some illustrations by Miss Alice Owen, a pupil of the Oxford Art School, will be found to do credit to her master and herself—especially the Durer facsimiles. And I have to thank Mr. Bunker, Assistant-Master at the same place, for a beautiful and instructive illustration of the finer processes of shading.

The plan of the whole work, in so far as it has a plan, will be seen to follow the schools or masters of Florence. The Historical Sketches, and their reference, will take the reader to as far as the

<sup>1</sup> There is a dissection of part of the Laocoön in Dr. Fau's 'Anatomy;' and progressive landscapes are in constant use.



student-works and sketches of Rafael and Michael Angelo : and it seems possible that a steady use of the Lessons in Part II. may enable a modern pupil to study such earlier and unfinished works of both masters as are to be found in University or Metropolitan collections. Copying finished pictures by great men is work for masters rather than pupils : in any case it is beyond our range. One of the best sets of accurate reproductions of Rafael Drawings is the work of Joseph Fisher, Esq., Curator of the Randolph Galleries in Oxford ; whom I have also to thank for some instructions in etching, which have been added to the chapter on Sketching in this book.

Though Venice contains the greatest examples of Colour in the world, Florence is the great school of Drawing. Solid study of accurate form must come first, because it can be taught to any person : and when that is learnt may come the delight and excitement of colour ; power in which is incommunicable, and which, taken by itself, would be mere intoxication. It is in Florence that the Gothic, or Lombard, or Western study of Painting and Sculpture advanced from the unknown Romanesque carvers to Nicolo Pisano, and from him to Michael Angelo ; and their torch was so carried forward in Gothic schools, that the recovered antiques of the Renaissance were no more than technically instructive models, which never dominated the spirit or the hand of the great Florentines ; though Michael Angelo willingly called the Torso of the Vatican his master. The progress of systematic study from Pisano to Michael Angelo is easily traceable in Florence ; and there only : though a master may gain I know not what by contemplating the supreme glories of colour and form in Venice. The clearness and heat, the labour and burden of the day must go before the splendour and pensiveness of sunset, although that hour seems worth all the others to a painter ; and

so it is with the great Gothic Art-period of the Middle Ages. Its progress in Florence must be understood before its consummation on the Adriatic.

This book has been written in fragments and at uncertain intervals, such as I could obtain, having the care of a large town parish; but it has passed under able inspection. I do not know how many and various methods, in oil and water-colour, may be said to be preferable to the course herein suggested; but I feel sure that he who goes through it fairly will have little to unlearn or retrace, and will be far enough advanced in the end to take his own line, and to modify or relinquish our rules in his own way. The book will then have answered its purpose to him, and made itself useless, as such works ought to do.

The progress of English water-colour painting has been very great within the last twenty years, and great changes have attended it. So much white is now mixed with distance-tints, and so much transparent medium with nearer colours, that many so-called water-colour drawings are, in fact, pictures in tempera. No doubt they are often very beautiful. Still, I think we are right in telling the student to use transparent tints for his first studies in colour and sketches from Nature. The use of solid water-colours, and all the processes of 'painting up' a drawing with them, are perhaps best learnt by practice in oils. Something will be found in our short chapter on Tempera and Fresco, as to the combination of oil-colours with other media.

I do not think, as a rule, systematic drawing is to be enforced before the age of thirteen or fourteen, unless in cases where natural intelligence and feeling produce, as they should, enough energy and docility in the pupil to make him really aim at

correctness. At first, let all children be encouraged to draw all things, and paint them after their fashion: they may try whatever they like. I have found that soldiers and cherries are on the whole very favourite beginnings for infant Art, partly from association and patriotism, and chiefly because both subjects involve the use of red pigments. Early works by our young masters should be moderately commended, and corrected as to 'keeping within lines:' but too much ought not to be said about them. Children's progress will be almost a certainty if a parent, governess, elder brother or sister will draw things in pencil outline for them, and encourage them to imitate. Much is done whenever the faintest feeling of self-expression by drawing is moved in a child: he comes under the influence of the spirit of observation and imitation from that day forward, and a source of originality and vigorous inner life is opened for him.

Many of us could say much of the strange comfort which Art affords all who recognize their own spiritual life; and I do not see why it should not be made an important means of promoting that sweetness and culture, which has been of late so eloquently commended to us.

The introductory chapters of this book were written before the opening of the late French Exhibition. They ought, I think, to have contained some attempts at answering the inevitable question about profits. It is no use recommending Art as a pursuit in this country unless one can hold out some kind of promise that it will pay: and though it is difficult to do so to the individual artist, the great trade-exhibition of this year enables us to make out a serious case in favour of popular study, even of the higher branches of Drawing and Colour. It has been at least very generally asserted, and it has never been denied, that in all constructive and ornamental trades, French

and other continental workmen have great advantage over our own artizans, from their skill in design, acquired through public Art-education. If they have, and keep this advantage, it must tell: that is to say, trade, work, and bread must go away from England to France and Germany; not to return until English design shall rival or excel French and German design. Now it has been repeatedly pointed out, especially by Mr. Ruskin in his lecture at Bradford, March 1859 ('The Two Paths,' p. 90), that all the best decorative design which has hitherto existed has been that of men well trained in the highest known forms of Drawing, and skilled in delineating the human figure and animal forms of all kinds. He also shews the almost-impossibility of beautiful decoration to men who are unaccustomed to the sight of beauty, artistic or natural. Therefore, when we recommend means of popular instruction in high Art, so called, i.e. when we suggest that good teaching in figure-drawing should be put within the artizan's reach, we recommend the best means of giving the artizan true power of design. Without saying anything of general culture, or education and development, it is clear that good original design pays, and is good for trade: and it is certain that you cannot have it without high training in correct drawing, in the first place; nor in the second, without giving the artizan free access to pictures and statues of real merit, and, where it is possible, to the sight of natural beauty. Born painters of the stamp of Turner and Blake will find both, 'somehow, for themselves; but for the sake of those who are not sons of the giants, open workmen's galleries and schools, and large wall-paintings, rapid but true in execution, are very much wanted in all our large towns. I daresay good primary schools are wanted still more. But the teaching above mentioned need not clash with them; it need not begin, except in special instances,

till the age when workmen's sons have left their schools. The sight of good colour and form will be better understood by men than boys. Parisian workmen may be seen sketching the statues of the Place de la Concorde: and we may depend upon it, that as soon as the skilled artizan has easy access to pictures rightly drawn and coloured, he will know how to get hints from them in designing furniture-patterns or carving capitals. The fact is, a great and remunerative means of popular culture has long been, so to speak, loose among us, and praying to be used for the benefit of the people; and it will be wise to leave it no longer unemployed.

Since this book was printed I have found Giotto's 'Canzone' on Poverty, in 'Rumohr's *Italianische Forschungen*,' ii. 51 (see p. 88), which I could not at first obtain. It is placed in an Appendix.

CHRIST CHURCH, *April*, 1868.



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A HANDBOOK OF  
PICTORIAL ART





# PICTORIAL ART.

## PART I. THEORY.

### INTRODUCTION.

#### CHAPTER I.

AS this Manual is intended to be both practical and theoretic, it must necessarily take the form partly of a series of essays in as popular language as is possible, and partly of a set of rules, or even recipes. It is quite as certain that every artist must learn his work by strictly following out severe rules, as it is that mere diligent obedience to rules by itself will *not* make an artist, in the higher and narrower sense of the word. And though this book is written for publication in a place of general and not special education, so that Art will have to be considered in it rather as a means of liberal education for the many than as an end or object to educate a few men for;—the necessity for strict compliance with its elementary rules is no less absolute and complete on that account. To say that we will treat Pictorial or other Art only as a means of educating the eye and hand and powers of observation, means, practically speaking, that we will only insist on its study to

a certain extent; or, that we will only teach a certain quantity of it. That quantity then, however small, ought to be taught with the highest accuracy: and the smaller the advance made by our pupils, the safer their grounding ought to be. Man may no doubt want but little painting here below; but he does not want that little wrong. And this is the first delusion with which most teachers have to contend. The pupil always says he 'only wants to draw a little,' and thinks that a little bad drawing is as well worth his acquiring as a little good. The fact is, it is not the want of time and effort which makes amateur work so weak as it often is. It is waste of time, and misdirection of effort, because the pupil will try to avoid proper study of line and light and shade at first. People do not fall into contemptibly bad style because they only want to draw a little, but because they want to produce great effect with little attention. In every serious study, and indeed in what are considered lighter pursuits—music, for instance—it is understood that nothing can come of nothing, and that all success must be won by hard and systematic exertion. This discovery has scarcely been made yet as to drawing—at least the necessity of steady and accurate work is not generally felt. One hears people talk of the accuracy of the artist's eye, and the firmness or delicacy of his touch, as if both accuracy and manual skill were to be taught them by a spell or communicated like infection. It takes them some time to realize that these powers are gained by slow degrees, and by use of the same means which are put in their own reach: that if they take those means they certainly will gain some power, and if not, probably not: that the workman they

admire began to learn his art by drawing and bisecting straight lines, and that they must do the same. Most learners, till lately, have refused to do the same. They have not given up the hope of doing a great deal without any trouble. They have an idea that great painters were born with an instinctive knowledge of how to draw the figure with anatomical correctness, and that Giorgione woke one morning and found himself possessed of his scale of flesh tints, and skill to mix them and lay them on. They argue much in this way: 'As Rafael and Titian (probably) became able to paint the Madonna di San Sisto or the Assumption without any hard work, so shall we be able to paint pretty landscapes, or portraits of our friends, or illustrations of our favourite poets, without any hard work. At least we may learn to wash in and wash out colour, and produce landscape sketches to show our friends, and to remind ourselves of scenes we have enjoyed; and that is all we want.' The fact that it sometimes brings this wish to partial and feeble fulfilment is the great attraction of the modern English Water-colour School, if that can be called a School which teaches so very little of any grammar of Art. A few years back the name of the Blottesque or Washy Style was a sadly well-merited one. And pictures were painted, by amateurs and professed artists alike, which were, like their producers, full of good spirit and bad drawing, and keen feeling and abundance of idleness, and waste of time, and life, and effort, and good colour and paper. A decided change for the better has taken place; and we think it may be said that the works of all first and second-rate water-colourists are now carried out with an accuracy of

drawing and honourable attempt at realization which was very rare ten years ago. Much of this is due to the advance of photography, which has called the popular eye to beauty of simple form and familiar detail in a remarkable manner. And, undoubtedly, the South Kensington Art Schools, and the many others which have arisen from them, or along with them, have produced important effects, which we may hope are destined to rapid increase. But it is still common to see both young and full-grown people begin the pursuit of Art at the wrong end, and try to copy pictures before they can draw straight lines, take up colour before form, and not only colour but complicated colour. All this is done; and it can lead to no educational result. Adult pupils, in particular, recoil from free-hand drawing with amusing contempt. One of the great difficulties of a conscientious master in a modern school is the continued struggle with ladies and gentlemen who think that accuracy is 'niggling,' that it will 'spoil their touch' to be able to draw a straight line, and that it will 'check their children's natural genius' if they are not let loose on the whole colour-box to begin with. We hold that the term Education means the 'bringing out' or development of the natural or original powers of the intellect, soul, and senses of man or woman. And to educate in Art is to develop the sense of colour and form, and the powers of the hand and eye. And these are very imperfectly developed, if at all, by the use of washes of colour, where the attention is directed only to tints, and withdrawn from anything like accurate representation of form. It is hard to get any one to see how surely confidence and power in the use of colour



will result from real knowledge of form ; and how especially this is the case in water-colour, where so much depends on confidence and rapidity, and so many great things are really done at speed. But there is the unmeaning confidence of ignorance, and the very different confidence of knowledge, which is alike rapid and unerring.

Many landscape painters, no doubt, have memories well stored with tolerably accurate conventional representations of mountain or other form ; the use a man makes of such representations in the detail of his picture is often called his 'touch' or his 'style.' We have heard persons, totally unable to draw, say that they meant to take a few lessons of Frederick Taylor, or of T. M. Richardson, 'just to learn his style ;' supremely unconscious that a man's touch or style is the way he has gradually acquired of expressing the facts he cares most for, and that it has taken him years of observation, and wandering by moor and glen, to learn to make the rapid touches which they think they can imitate by the eye, without understanding them. They forget, moreover, that the painter they wish to imitate, probably went through severe technical education as a boy before he began to draw from nature, and that he has been drawing from nature ever since. And accordingly we see much time wasted in producing copies or imitations of the slighter work of popular water-colourists, which are not only totally valueless and nugatory as pictures, but represent so much waste of time, and that kind of indolent half-effort the wrong way, which never can, and never ought to, end in anything but vexation and failure.



Most persons, however, to do them justice, wish to do something more than copy other men's work, and display the copies. They wish, as they say, to be able to make telling and graphic sketches of scenery or action by way of record, to assist their memory of pleasant or striking events or places. This is altogether right. And they have two things to consider. First, how great a thing they wish for;—how very important an advantage it is to have the power of pictorial expression;—whether it be not worth some toil to be able to save and store up impressions of beauty which perhaps never can be seen more than once: and secondly, if to this end they will avail themselves of those plain elementary means of instruction in Art which are perfectly well-ascertained to be best for them, which are a safe foundation for every kind of superstructure, and which, once mastered, will never leave them.

Lord Bacon says that 'he who has a wife and children has given hostages to fortune.' I have often thought, that to have won oneself any skill in or attachment to Pictorial Art is, in an important sense, to have taken hostages from fortune. This is literally true of those who have advanced far enough in the study of Art to be able to produce works which are either sublime or instructive, or affecting, or even saleable. In the last case, as in the others, the artist can produce a thing which has a market value; and, except under improbable or distant contingencies, he has secured a livelihood. But we are engaged at present with Art as a branch of liberal education. In other words, we are considering what we may expect the study of Art to do for the man, even were he to

produce no works of Art at all. It will be an after-consideration, what we may expect the man to do for us, supposing him to have taken our education kindly, and to have learnt to produce works above a certain standard. This subject will be considered when we go into the question of how much may be taught all classes of men by paintings exhibited in public, or done in fresco on public buildings; and what office such works might hold in national education. At present we have to answer the question, What is the function of Art in ordinary liberal education? What does the careful amateur gain by practising it? What will teaching and practice in drawing do for a person who does not expect or intend ever to make pictures to sell? What good will he get while he is learning, and what will it be worth to him to have learned, more or less about Art?

We say, it will do him good mentally, morally, and physically. Mentally, it will train his mind to grasp at ideas of Beauty; morally, it will make him thankful for them, save him from lower desires, and open to him the way of aspiration; physically, it will teach him how to make the hand obey the eye with a perfect service, and give him a vast advantage in accomplishments, or sports, or serious works of accuracy and skill, which depend for success on perfect union in action of eye and hand. It is our object just now to point out some of the benefits which the study of Art may probably confer on persons of ordinary quickness, feeling, and capacity. There seems no practical necessity for much distinction between the intellectual and moral benefits to be derived from it, if it be rightly

pursued. They may be distinguished, no doubt. Art may be skilfully and wrongly practised. There have been many bad men who were good painters, as there have probably been undevout astronomers, who were not mad. Still there can be no doubt that, practically speaking, the powers of the mind, and the higher qualities of the heart, are trained and improved together, through right study of Nature by Art, and of Art as a means of interpreting Nature. There are no human faculties where development can be better for our own generation than those of observation and admiration. Habits of scientific observation are formed, no doubt, by the special training which men have to go through while preparing for certain professions. But a good foundation for them may be laid, and help, which will be valuable hereafter, may be acquired in earlier life, by any young person who acquires the habit of observing structure, and form as it indicates structure, and of learning to understand, and prize, and seek for the beauty which always accompanies perfection of structure. Mentally, the discovering and reasoning powers, the general intelligence, must gain greatly from that close accuracy of eye which is the result of careful drawing from Nature. Morally, there is what we may call the great sixth sense of admiration, which the proper study of outer Nature seems of all things the best calculated to draw out in men of our own time, and which is beyond all others needed in our own time, because it supplies a fund of enjoyment for the many which is almost inexhaustible. Structural beauty is one of the objects of the scientific analyst, and he may find it in the dissected organs of animals or

flowers. The painter would rather record their outward appearance than dissect them. Yet few men of science would not be well pleased to have become good draughtsmen from nature early in life; and such men would not deny that their eyes had gained quickness of observation in the inside structures of things, from faithful attempts to represent their outsides. We need not speak of the advantages of clear or accurate drawing in most professions, nor do we propose to do so. For, in the first instance, Art must minister and appeal to enjoyment of visible nature, and to the sense of admiration. This, from its entire unselfishness, is one of the highest forms of human pleasure. And the chief office of Art for all people is really to show them how this great function of enjoyment is within reach of all. It would be almost new ground for an essayist, to go thoroughly into the nature of what we call Admiration, and show how it involves delighted recognition of something superior to oneself. Perhaps it is the great self-consciousness of most persons of our time, which makes it specially valuable for them to have the free and habitual use of a faculty which enables them to forget themselves. We may just notice how important, and yet how easy to make, is the step between admiration and aspiration. But the fact is, that the mere enjoyment of natural beauty is of great consequence for all our middle and lower classes at this time, simply because it is a strong and innocent enjoyment. That they cannot generally appreciate it now is no reason for our supposing that they are incapable of being taught to appreciate. That a person cannot see the beauty of natural objects till he is told of it, does



not make it less beneficial to him to be told. Having once learnt to see it, he will, in all human probability, make progress: he will find that a new path of observation and enjoyment is opened to his mind, and will soon come, as we all do, to take more pleasure in the little store of facts and feelings he has obtained for himself, than in all he may have learnt from other men's teaching. By setting any person to draw from Nature or from good models, we withdraw him from the sphere of lesson-learning, and enable him to find out something for himself; and all thoughtful persons will see that this is an important step in his education, although many other people may have taken it before, and discovered the same fact for themselves. It is a new and important fact, when a new learner becomes aware of an old fact. The truth is, that persons who say they do not see the beauty of common things, mean almost always that they do not think it worth their while to see it, and very generally, that they do not believe in its existence. Many such persons, however, are kind-hearted and acute enough to allow that others may do with advantage what they do not care to do; and that though it is not in their way to consider ravens and lilies with any particular attention, it may be of use to a poor or hard-worked man to do so, because it gives him some freshness and interest in life, and occupies him harmlessly and pleasantly.

We put aside, for a few pages only, the important fact of how the exercise of the faculty of Imitation by Drawing invariably interests the mind in the object drawn: so that a person who never looked at, say even 'a cat or a fiddle' before, would pay attention to



both cats and fiddles if he had seen Rafael's painting of the latter and Veronese's of the former<sup>1</sup>. The pleasure which results from merely imitative drawing is, however, not a high one. Art is, after all, the pursuit of Beauty, a means of learning to produce it or appreciate it; and on this matter it has something like a prejudice to contend with in our own time and country. We cannot help noticing a strange preference on the part of the British mind for ugliness, plainness, or absence of outward interest. It is now so far disturbed, that we see the strength of its hold on the vulgar of all classes. It is exactly the same in fine people, who vote Art a bore, as it is in untaught religionists, who have a notion that Art is carnal and sinful, more excusably and conscientiously. Indeed, educated people are not much to be blamed for sometimes using contemptuous expressions about Art, when they have been annoyed by foolish or insincere raptures on the subject. But it is worthy of our attention that the faculty of Admiration needs cultivation among educated people quite as much as it does among the uneducated. In the first place, thought and leisure for thought are necessary to its development, and our own days are both idle and busy: and in the next, those who are making marked progress in other studies leave themselves too little time for it. Knowledge puffeth up, and the natural tendency of a person who is fast acquiring information from books is rather to under-

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Browning, 'Fra Lippo Lippi':—

'For, don't you mark, we're *made so*, that we love  
First when we see them painted, things we have passed  
Perhaps a hundred times, nor cared to see,' &c., &c.

value than to admire what he does not find in his books. Book-knowledge is rapidly gained, and is self-conscious : it is almost the very contrary with knowledge of nature. Indeed we think that when that is acquired in some degree, and the workman knows that his eye can see new things, and his hand record them, he is rather inclined to enjoy himself than to be proud of himself. And though, no doubt, young persons may be as foolishly vain of their drawings as of anything else, there is no doubt that if good models, natural or other, are kept before them, they ought not to fall into temptations of that kind, seeing that with their skill, their appreciation of the greater beauty before them must necessarily increase.

It is surprising how recent the general taste for beauty of natural scenery is. A feeling on the subject, which is now almost national, has been awakened by the various works of Mr. Ruskin. His inspirations seem to have been partly, as he himself says, drawn from the great works of Turner. They could not have been his, however, without the most devoted study of all the outer aspects of nature, the closest, perhaps, ever bestowed by any man on record. Without him, landscape Art would probably have remained at the point to which Stanfield, Creswick, Harding, and Copley Fielding brought it twenty years ago. Pre-Raphaelitism, by which we mean correct drawing, and the English domestic School of Art, would certainly have had less rapid success. The effect of his works on Art will probably not be appreciated during his lifetime : but nothing can be more strangely true than his remarks on the eighteenth-century feeling about scenery. It

is surprising how entirely the life of towns seems to have sufficed at that time to men who really possessed great feeling, besides all their masculine power of intellect. Thinkers or writers, wits as they called themselves, were content with their own resources and their books, and lived as if their only game was man. The life of the Club, the Mall, the coffee-house, and the theatre, with the full enjoyment of each other's conversation at a time when personal intercourse stood in the place of light reading, sufficed them for work and rest. Nor is much to be said against them for following the ways of their time. But they could and did dispense with sources of change and repose, and pensive or active pleasure, which we could not part with for ourselves, and hope to extend to others. To the man of letters, from Dryden's time to Pope's, and thence till well into the long life of Turner, all that was not the Town was the Country; and was looked on as a region mainly productive of cream. Innocence was supposed to be another of its staple products; its inhabitants all carried crooks (probably none of their urban describers ever formed a conception of the uses of that instrument), and performed a good deal on pipes. As for wild, or silvan, or rugged scenery, if it was believed in at all, it seems to have been looked on much as if it was in the other world; that is to say, with the feeling that no one in his senses would go there while he could possibly avoid it. Conventional descriptions of cool glades and purling brooks, and mountains which lifted their horrid peaks above the clouds, seem to have sufficed for the imagination: and two or three proverbial sayings will tolerably well express all we know about

men's feelings concerning any scenery, except town scenery. One is the mythic Frenchman's 'Aimez vous les beautés de la Nature? Pour moi, je les abhorre.' Another comes from no less a man than the great Blake — 'I find Nature abominably in my way!' And a third is the ironical question and answer of Christopher North, 'What is the motive with which a thinking being should undertake a pilgrimage to the Lakes? Why, the eating and drinking, to be sure!'

Habits of thought of this kind, or something like it, as many of us will remember, lasted up to our own youth<sup>1</sup>. The love of sport of course modified this view of nature to men: the hunter is the hunter in all ages and times, and has often formed a link between the regular town-wit and the regular countryman. In the days of Addison, however, we know that such people were only admitted into society like Sir Roger de Coverly, under proper guidance, and, so to speak, with a ring through their noses. Latterly the taste for mountain adventure has arisen as a kind of compromise between field-sports and contemplative enjoyment of the loftier scenery of nature. But it is obvious that, till quite lately, all the appeal of nature was simply lost to the minds of able men. Art-study, if they undertook

<sup>1</sup> The Diary and Conversations of Miss Berry give some curious illustrations of inability to give real attention to natural beauty. There was no want of sensibility, as it seems: she speaks of being fairly overcome by the pass between Sallenches and Chamonix, and owns the impossibility of describing it. But she makes no attempt whatever at natural description anywhere else from London to Naples. Beautiful, truly romantic, good roads, and fleas, sum up all her country pictures. On towns and galleries she is voluble and intelligent.



it at all, was scholastic from beginning to end. Casts and skeletons to draw from, ancient masters to draw after; landscape really as conventional and fixed in its rules as Byzantine Mosaic: no domestic subject, except Dutch subject; the old Renaissance-classic enthusiasm, fast perishing,—these things were all the ordinary student had to look to. And men are not first moved to wish to paint by beauties of abstract form, but by trees, and clouds, and flowers, and sunsets. And when they were wont to find that the rules of Art would only let them paint trees brown, and took no notice of clouds at all, they felt unable to connect Art with Nature. This accounts for a fact in the biography of one of the greatest men in modern times, which seems almost to have baffled his very able biographer. Goëthe (see Lewis' life of him), with every wish to pursue Art, never had any success in it, though he made considerable exertions. Failing in perhaps nothing else he attempted, he failed in that. It is natural enough. He was not taught to look for Beauty in the free field and on the hill-side, but in the studio: he did not feel the perpetual solicitation of outer Nature:—not to say that he had countless other ways of expressing Thought continually pressing upon him, and that 'non omnia possumus omnes.' When he looked on beautiful scenes, it was generally in the company of other persons, male, or probably female, to whose forms Nature was only a background. And to one who claimed prompt success as a right, severe and plodding study of line must have been intolerable. It is useless to set up Painting against Poetry to one who has the highest powers of Poetry, and greatest command of

ideas and language; because he has the readier means of self-expression prepared for his hand. So great a name in the Romantic as the author of *Goetz von Berlichingen* can hardly have had much sympathy with the classicism of the studios of 1770-1800.

There is no doubt that the strong feeling for all Pictorial Art which is experienced and expressed by our own generation, originated in the love of Landscape. And it is quite possible that there may be persons capable of finding instruction and enjoyment of the highest character in landscape Art, who nevertheless shrink from severe free-hand drawing in the first instance. We think on the whole that there is an alternative for them, which will be stated at length in our more practical chapters. Speaking in the fewest possible words, let them study and copy with real exactness the woodcuts of Albert Durer, and the mezzotints of Turner's *Liber Studiorum*. We have known instances where whole years of eager and useless attempts at water-colour landscape have been utilized in the end; by the mere fact of their bringing the impatient student to his senses, and sending him at last to methodical work in line. The haste and impatience which are derived from genuine eagerness to reproduce keenly-felt images of beauty, may be tamed and systematized into a kind of success. Not that it will ever satisfy. In all cases of true artistic feeling the pursuit is the reward, not the result. But the vulgar impatience of idleness or indifference, which is always demanding large results from slight exertions, is as hopeless in painting as in any other pursuit whatever.



It is for what are called the upper working-classes of our own time that the study of Art may do the most. Whatever definition of Art we may come to, its office is the pursuit of Beauty; and its educational function must be to create and gratify the desire of Beauty wherever it is needed. And it is sadly needed in our own time and country. No thinking person who is at all acquainted with the habits and surroundings of English lower-middle life, in town or country, can help feeling how great is its need of freshness, of interest, of the sense of innocent enjoyment by the eye, of appreciation of natural beauty when seen, or of any hope or desire of it at any time. There is painful truth in the saying that the English middle-classes are drugged with business, and incapable of at least many rational enjoyments, and the poorer classes blinded with labour, and hopeless of any but the lowest pleasures. No one, who has not seen it, can have a conception of how unvaried, monotonous, unthoughtful, weary, and undeveloped is the life of large masses of our own people; and how the mere wish for change, variety, play of mind and relief of new idea, constantly solicits men to vicious pleasures, because they are without access to harmless ones. Nor will any one who is acquainted with the subject deny, that cheap Art Schools, well supplied with natural models, would open a path of pleasure and security, to many, at least, of the respectable working-classes. It may take much time and exertion before carpenters and bricklayers are taught to enjoy themselves in drawing from nature: but many have been taught it in the last ten years, and its effect is already visible in our architecture.



141 Tyrwhitt (Rev. R. St. John) A Handbook  
of Pictorial Art. With a Chapter on  
Perspective by A. Macdonald, 4 chromo-  
lithograph plates, 2 original mounted photo-  
graphs (one being a landscape shot), several  
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stamped morocco, rubricated edge, (embossed  
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Oxford, 1868



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Twentieth Century, with Contemporary  
Biographies, 876 illustrations, 4to, publisher's morocco gilt, g.e. (rubbed), £10 [G1  
Brighthelm, 1907.

This University may take not unjust pride in having been one of the foremost institutions in the country to demand and encourage the labours of artist workmen. Those who taught and organised the class of men who execute the flower carvings of modern buildings in Oxford and London may say at least that they have called out the energies of an artist-class in a short time, and created a real feeling for Beauty exactly among the men who wanted it most. It remains to be seen how far the Workman's School of Art will advance; whether, and how soon, figure sculpture and original groups may succeed simply floral decoration. And we may hope for the best: for though hardly any truly original works have yet been produced, much has been done in little time; a large number of men have been led to faithful study of nature, and their example and teaching will not fail among their companions. It is idle to say that a large majority of the working-classes never will accept any teaching from Art Schools. The same remark applies to model lodgings, to baths and washhouses, and to every remedial experiment, and attempt at improvement. In all these matters the real question is about the benefits conferred on those who *will* avail themselves of the advantages offered. Supposing these advantages to be anything tangible, one may expect that the numbers of those who seek them will increase in geometrical proportion. Nobody expects that the whole of the working-classes will at once take to drawing and entirely renounce strong liquor: what is hoped is that a fair per-centage of them may be partly secured from temptation to excess by having a finer



mental stimulus put in their reach, instead of the coarser physical one. And it is hoped that the advantages of such a change will be proclaimed by those who share in them: and that they will bear witness to each other of that great and keen enjoyment of the beauty of His works which God has set within every man's reach, and whose intensity and boundlessness is best known by those who have laboured for it the longest.

There is a tale in which a variety of gifts are bestowed on a Prince at his birth. Last of all it is given him by his uncle, an eminent and well-disposed enchanter, that for the term of his natural life he shall be able to see the Fairies. 'He shall see all the hidden beauty and latent life which other men's eyes are not fine enough to see. He shall know the fretful spirits which live under the holly leaves and in the curls of the young ferns; and beneath the scarlet agarics; and on Oxfordshire brick walls, all crimson and green; and in the orange-and-grey lichens of winter oak roots. He shall know all about the dwellers in the Alpine rose, and meet face to face "the Brown Men of the Moors, that stay beneath the heather bell." He shall understand the life that is in the leaves, and how they faint under heat of noon, and drink deep of summer rain. He shall know the spirits of structure and growth, and the toughness of old yews and thorns, and the sad strength of the fir and cypress. Also he shall be on terms with the spirits of fire and light, and the living rays which make colour of sky and cloud and distance; and with all the underground tribes who stain earths and metals and jewels, and

dole out the elements of man's frame with all its beauty; and its fearfulness and wonder,—seeing to this day it is made of the substance of the earth and dust of the ground. And having all these gifts, he will care little for what vulgar men strive for, and nothing for what evil men desire; and the common troubles of life will touch him lightly, for he will have that within him which they cannot touch. And because of the friends he sees, and who see him, he shall always bear himself gently and stoutly among men, with an high heart and an humble.'

Something like this was the gift to the fairy Prince, as we remember it; and to have one's eyes opened to the beauty of common things is at least an analogous gift. In any case, every possible means of refinement, and every possible access to harmless enjoyment, and every possible encouragement to the sense of Beauty, seems to be the thing most needful at this moment for the inner life of our respectable middle and lower classes. Music does something for them, we know not how much; and Pictorial Art may do we know not how much more. An excellent system is fairly at work almost throughout the country; we have but to add interest and vigour to its working. Practical questions as to the possibility, or, in other words, the value as compared with the cost, of general Art Education, must be considered in another chapter.

## CHAPTER II.

IN the first chapter Art has been viewed rather as a means of general education, than as an end with an education of its own, or an object of special training. The latter way of contemplating it is of course the most proper for such a Manual as this. It will be necessary, however, to look at our subject both ways, and consider how high and well diffused Art Instruction might react on national character and education, and how it might be made a powerful means of teaching, as well as a valuable thing to be taught.

Generally speaking, the Objects of Art Education will be—

1. To provide for the few, in every class of life, who are capable of producing original or impressive works, such training as shall best acquaint them with their own especial gifts, and best enable them, by discipline and encouragement, to do themselves full justice. In their education Art is considered as an end or object.

2. Our second object will be to place within reach of the people generally such an education in form and colour as shall enable any person to ascertain and develop whatever powers he may possess of Observation and Imitation, or of Pictorial Expression, direct or symbolic.

This part of our treatise seems also the proper place for attempting some such tentative definition of Art, as shall at least explain what we understand by it, as a thing for men to teach and to learn. We may define it as ‘That exercise of their faculties by which men express thoughts or ideas of beauty, or truth, or nobleness, by means of Colour and Form. We also say of their thoughts and ideas, that they may be referred to Nature as their source, and to the imagination, or other mental operation, for the shape in which the man expresses or presents them<sup>1</sup>.’

Our first purpose, if successful, would result in a School of Painters well trained in technical operations, accumulating knowledge in the use of materials and tools, and trained in accuracy of hand and eye. They will produce works of more or less originality and importance, which will bear their part in popular education, by appealing through the eye to thought, imagination, and feeling.

The success of our second object amounts to a national and popular advance in various branches of Art, from

<sup>1</sup> This definition is in accordance with Mr. Ruskin’s account of all true Art as the testimony of man’s delight in God’s work. Nature is His work, and from observation of Nature man obtains all types of beauty. He is enabled to impress his own thought or character on them when he reproduces them ; and in proportion as they are impressed by the power and brilliancy of the producer, we call them Ideal, Sublime, Original, Imaginative, and so on. As for the nature of Beauty, it seems to defy all real analysis ; and this, and its universal presence, and the intensely powerful feeling it evokes, seem to point to its being a direct manifestation of Divine Power. Again, the fact that Man can produce it in high perfection, but cannot analyze it, or clearly say how he produces it, seems to throw some light on the expression that man was made in the Image of God.



the numbers and emulation of those who will take interest in them. By advance in Art, as regards these, we mean greater appreciation of it, which is one form of mental improvement; and greater skill in producing minor works of conventional or applied Art—copies, patterns and designs, for example. These will, in time, be produced and multiplied with sufficient skill and in sufficient quantity to bring them within easy reach of those who need them most, that is to say, of our lower classes. Of course, if general taste and intelligence as to Painting be improved, the Arts of Design, Etching, Engraving, Architectural Carving, and indeed Photography, will advance in a corresponding way.

To propose either of these branches of Art as a part of liberal or of ordinary education at once raises the question, How far persons of average or inferior capacity, or with only a common amount of leisure and energy, can learn, or be taught, Drawing? for on accurate drawing of forms all Art of course depends. In answering this question the old difficulty recurs, that Art requires as real application as any other study, and that people will not pursue it in earnest. They still think of it only as what they call an accomplishment, that is to say, an ornamental addition to education, which gives a finish, whether it be good or not. In short, because they want but little of it, they do not care about the value of that little. We submit that no part of education ought to be trifled with, and that no pupil ought to be encouraged to begin anything which he is not to follow out in a way which will give him either development or grasp, range of thought, or accuracy. A single course of freehand drawing,



thoroughly and faithfully worked through by the pupil, will give him an amount of patience, fineness of hand, and accurate ocular calculation, which will last him his life. The same time, spent in water-colour washes, will only debauch his power of attention, and expose him to contempt from the rapidly increasing number of those who know a little of what Drawing really is. The usual and right line of argument in favour of our classical education is based on the admission that such education is a training in accuracy and proper habits of thought and work. And such training may be found in grammar of Art as well as in grammar of language. It should be remembered, again, now that Art Schools are working to some purpose, that the profession and practice of indifferent drawing and colour, as an accomplishment, is seen to be more foolish as the public eye, that is to say, the eyes of a large per-centage of the educated public, acquire ideas about right forms and wrong forms; and when such knowledge is once gained, it becomes rather difficult and disagreeable to look over portfolios of the present day. As to the question of power to learn to draw rightly, it is simply one of time and attention; of a little time and a little real attention. Make it really a part of education, and boys and girls will be educated by it. To imagine that the hand and eye which can stop a strongly-hit cricket ball, and then perhaps 'shy' down a distant wicket, are really unable to draw any form their owner pleases, is absurd. Conceive, again, the dexterity, the prompt, perfect and harmonious action of hand and eye which are required to cut down a grouse whirring away before

the wind, or a 'rocketing' pheasant. Fine embroidery requires quite as much eye as the best etching; so does making a small nail or rivet on the anvil, or good cabinet work, or even planing a board to a true surface. Think of the power which is daily shown on bodily dexterities, or operations of ordinarily skilled labour, and you cannot fail to see how small a share of it, bestowed fairly on study of form, would give man or woman a continually increasing interest and sense of enjoyment all through life.

There is no doubt that some persons, almost from childhood, show inclination for drawing, or propensity to express themselves in lines and colours. But they do not do so accurately or rightly from childhood. They require teaching like other people, and if they will not submit to be taught, their efforts will be as contemptibly clever as other people's are contemptibly stupid. Those, however, who have real feeling for nature will generally be led, from impotent efforts to record their favourite scenes, to something like systematic training, in order to learn to do their perceptions justice. Thus, even Turner, if one may judge from his earliest known works, went through a stage of frank unsuccessful efforts at colour and realization, before he began that course of plain architectural drawing and exact mechanical labour which gave his hand its certainty. Genius for drawing, it has been said with perfect truth, is genius for taking an unusual amount of trouble to learn it;—or power of concentrating intense attention on the subject. There may be great difference between people's natural powers and faculties. What we say is, that that difference is not great enough either to enable

the naturally gifted person to draw without proper teaching, or to prevent the ordinary student from learning to draw to good purpose, if he really wishes it. No desperate efforts of will are needed; only steady attention and patience in drawing and bisecting straight lines.

There is no doubt that what we call a taste for drawing depends on development of the faculties of observation and imitation, or representation, and that it can hardly exist without them. In many children the habit of observing, or seeking enjoyment from natural objects, is early formed; and these will be our best pupils: but any obedient boy or girl of twelve or thirteen may master elementary difficulties with little addition to the course of daily lessons: and in all, the first sense of success or advancing skill will almost secure further advance. The necessary faculties exist in all; but no doubt every person's use of his faculties will be modified by the access he may or may not obtain to beautiful objects. Art Schools thrive in smaller towns or country places where men can really see what nature is. But the disadvantages under which the inhabitants of great cities labour may be steadily contended with. Excursion trains—galleries of good copies, open rather on week-day evenings than on Sundays—cheap Art instruction and prizes—these things will do much; and we have not yet seen all that they may do. Nor must it be forgotten that every successful pupil will call out rivals. But to assist in providing means and opportunities of this kind is, in all probability, a good work of real importance. One cannot help remembering

how Blake lived his life without any sight of the higher beauties of nature, and how Turner spent a fourth of his in searching hard for landscape subject within reach of Old Maiden Lane. His case, described with touching eloquence in 'Modern Painters,' vol. v., is a not unfair illustration of the great difficulty of Art teaching for the lower classes of our own people. They have so little access to natural beauty of any kind; and it is by the sight of it that the mind is first stimulated into effort to record its impressions. Beauty is in the eye of the gazer, it is said; but the eye must be taught and encouraged to look for it: and when once the habit of looking for it is established, the habit becomes a want, and begins to gratify itself, and react on itself, and to gather powers for fresh seeking and fresh gratification. The great Poet of Nature was said to have created the faculties by which his works can be enjoyed, and the saying is almost literally true. It is certain that Wordsworth did teach a large part of his generation to look on natural objects with far more careful and searching eyes than before, and that they did see far more in nature in consequence; and that a great amount of high and pure enjoyment was in consequence thrown open to them and their descendants. And something like the same method may be applied generally in education. Draw common natural objects, and you will see them as Wordsworth saw them; i.e. with some sense of the beauty that is in them, and of the enjoyment which is to be drawn from them. Our Schools of Art are in a measure teaching this; but more might be attempted, and this great means of self-cultivation



might be set in all men's way. For, as every person knows who has ever tried to make a careful copy of any object or picture he really liked, there is nothing like the imitative faculty to excite and train the observing faculty. The eye guides the hand, but the use of the hand trains the eye. It is not till one has tried to imitate a picture touch for touch that one really sees its touches. No one can understand the difficulty or the pleasure of Art till he has tried what it is to produce a likeness of something, and learnt that, for long and perhaps for ever, study and practice only discover fresh difficulties. It is so ordered, and we have reason to be thankful for it, that very slight success gives very great pleasure.

There is a passage in Mr. Browning's 'Fra Lippo Lippi' which bears so forcibly on the pleasures of using the imitative power, and puts what we wish to express so pithily, that we cannot help quoting it here, though we have partly anticipated it:—

' For, don't you mark, we're *made so*, that we love  
*First when we see them painted*, things we have passed  
Perhaps a hundred times, nor cared to see.  
And so they are better, painted : better to us,  
Which is the same thing. Art was given for that :  
God uses us to help each other so  
Lending our minds out.'

Real progress is constantly made by pupils whose efforts are not much appreciated by themselves or others. They appreciate better, they draw harder, they gather determination, patience, accuracy ; until at last their time comes, and power begins to wait on feeling :



and from that time, whatever they produce, they are artists at heart.

But in our great towns, and for a sadly great part of our population, natural beauty is hard to reach. There are few who live among mountains and rivers, and have the continual appeal of Nature before them. Yet those who have it very generally neglect it: and much may be done with little means. An artisan who has a few flowers in his room may perhaps learn to draw their leaves—and if he does so, the day on which his first efforts have a little success is likely to be a happy one for him. And here is the importance of Art Schools and open museums and collections, by which fit types and forms of natural beauty may be made accessible to those who cannot go to Nature for themselves<sup>1</sup>. The Douglas ‘loved better to hear the lark sing than the mouse squeak.’ So does the landscape painter. But for all that, if a few Creswicks, or Hardings, or Stanfields, could be hung in public view in all our towns, they would have no small effect on men’s minds—and would form a silent school of landscape in themselves.

Accordingly, the importance of copies and multiplications of works of Art, and of simple studies, is very great just now, and such work might employ more persons than it does. Any real transcript of Nature which will interpret her to the popular eye has its value. The taste or want by which Nature is enjoyed has to be created. The first step is to set the right

<sup>1</sup> Casts of blackberries, primroses, and wayside beauties in general, are of great value in this way, and illustrate Fra Lippo Lippi’s view remarkably well.

representations of Nature before men ; the next, to get them to study by using the hand, and learn to see by the attempt at imitation.

Of course, exposing good pictures to public view is one great means, the first step which is really possible. As to how this should be effected, we may begin with the testimony of the first, or one or two of the first, painters of our time and country in the higher scale of Art. We give no opinion, at present, about attempts at landscape frescoes ; we only say that means might be found for gratuitous exhibition of all kinds of Art-works. And we must here quote some important evidence given by Watts, and Armitage, and Sir C. Lindsay, to the Royal Academy Commission :—

*Evidence of G. F. Watts, Esq., before the Royal Academy Commission.*  
(*Blue-book*, p. 333, sq.)

‘ A. 3134. The Royal Academy should, by way of developing taste, do something towards placing before the eyes of the public at large the best specimens of Art. \* \* \* The students of the Royal Academy who made good designs and gained medals should be given a set of designs, perhaps by Mr. Herbert or Mr. Dyce, and, with a certain small allowance, required to carry them out on the walls of some public building.

‘ Q. For instance, the School at Eton, perhaps St. Paul’s, and railway stations ?

‘ A. Yes ; wherever there is a bare wall. I do not think there would be any great difficulty in finding artists quite capable of directing such works.’

‘ Q. 3174. You have led the way in what you suggest by painting the great hall at Lincoln’s Inn ?

‘ A. Yes ; and years ago I offered to paint the great hall at the Euston Square Station \* \* \* receiving the bare outlay of my expenditure in scaffolding and colours. \* \* \* (In the then state

of railway property even that expense was not considered justifiable.)

‘Q. 3179. Would not this involve too great sacrifice of time and money on the part of the artist \* \* \*?’

‘A. No, I do not think so. Mr. Maclise, (e.g.) if he were requested to furnish a series of designs for the Royal Academy, to be executed under the supervision of a competent man, would, I am sure, make them with great pleasure; and if the Academy were to pay him something for doing them he would not probably charge a great deal for a public purpose.

‘Q. 3180. Do you think the taste for these mural decorations is increasing in the country?’

‘A. Not so much as would be desirable; but that is mainly because they are not enough seen. They are only executed where the public at large do not see them. I think also they are much too expensive. I should *at first employ students upon them; and scatter them abroad as much as possible.*’

See also Sir Coutts Lindsay’s evidence, p. 410, Q. 3827:—

‘With few exceptions, the frescoes which our artists have painted have been too much finished in detail, and much too little considered in the mass—they have painted them like easel pictures; the consequence is the works have cost more time than the artist could afford to expend; and fresco painting has been a losing concern.’

For confirmation of Mr. Watts’s view on mural painting, see Answers 3834, 3835, where the advantage, for advanced students, of working under the supervision of a thorough painter, and from his designs, is noticed.

With this corresponds Mr. Armitage’s evidence, which strongly commends the French principle of teaching pursued by great painters like Delaroche, Coignet, or Picot, who admitted a large number of students into their own *ateliers*.

P. 540. '*A.* 5020. Our Academy should take that sort of education in hand.'

P. 541. '*A.* 5029. I worked at the large oil-painting in the *École des Beaux-Arts*, under Delaroche's superintendence.'

'*A.* 5030. There is not a sufficient demand for historical Art in England to create such schools (in private *ateliers*); but I think that one head school at the Academy would be of the greatest possible benefit to the future generation of artists.'

'*A.* 5031. The demand for serious Art (Art involving good draughtsmanship) is not sufficiently large to induce great painters to undertake the training of students. A thorough course of drawing would be of great advantage both to portrait-painters and landscape-painters; but they are generally of a different opinion, and the public eye is not yet sufficiently educated to detect their weakness in drawing.'

It has been said in praise of the Roman Church that she has made Art the handmaid of Religion. This is no doubt true in a sense; it is not to be denied that music, painting, and sculpture have been made auxiliary in various ways to religious teaching and religious emotion in Roman churches and convents. But the distinction between the two ways of using Art as the handmaid of religion is to be noticed: we think in this country that it is as desirable to make use of Painting for religious instruction through the imagination, as it is useless and wrong to try to excite religious feeling by ideal personifications of beauty and sanctity. Pictures of the events of Holy Scripture, whether on glass, in mosaic, or in fresco, have been used from the time of the early paintings in the Catacombs for instruction; to teach simple people the facts of their faith, to enable them to realize, to aid their belief by giving them some



conception of how events and men did actually look at the time of action. Also, for the same purpose, symbolism has been made great use of to convey ideas, necessarily imperfect, of persons and events which are practically and literally inconceivable: as of Divine Presence, of the Last Judgment, &c. Again, it has been used to lead partly instructed persons into useful trains of thought: as the Good Shepherd, the Ark representing the Church, the Fish as representing the believer, and others. So many of the receptive faculties of our minds find delightful employment in noticing and following out analogies, that the value of these symbolisms can hardly be overrated: to this day both educated and uneducated people might follow out the train of ideas suggested by the Ark, as representing the great company of believers on earth, with pleasure and advantage. And to this day careful historical frescoes, boldly, perhaps roughly done<sup>1</sup>, designed by men like Watts and Armitage, and painted by their pupils, after proper antiquarian and topographical study, would be an incalculable help to all classes in realizing the actual character of events which have often lost their vividness as facts, and seem facts no longer, only narratives dimly remembered and passively believed. But the emotional use of Beauty by Religion, that is to say, the setting up images and pictures of saints in churches, in any position or action, except that of fellow-worshippers with the congregation, will not be tolerated in our time and country. Sooner or later, it is felt, that the beautiful image set

<sup>1</sup> As Paul Uccello's in the Cloisters of Santa Maria Novella.



up to stimulate devotion of simple minds, attracts it to itself, and becomes simply an idol. But nobody ever would worship before Tintoret's Paradise, or Michael Angelo's Last Judgment; though the thoughts both pictures would call up in his mind might make his worship more earnest for a whole lifetime. Still less danger of anything like image-worship would follow from straightforward representations of Old and New Testament history, where Mount Sinai should be painted like Mount Sinai, and Moses and Joshua according to some careful conception of their actual form, dress, and presence; or, again, from pictures of our Lord's Life with His Apostles, in which Gennesaret, and its soft hills, and knots of palm, and fringe of oleanders should be faithfully drawn, and the sacred persons represented as they appeared and walked on earth, not in senatorial togas and the trappings of Pagan dignitaries. Mr. Herbert's picture of Moses, as Father of the Law, is no unworthy example of proper treatment of a historical subject in pictures for national instruction. Without discussing his ideal of Moses, or entering into the question whether his Hebrews should wear Ninevite, or Egyptian, or modern Arab dresses, there is no doubt that there is an amount of historical realization about his picture which will give any attentive spectator, taught or untaught, something like an inward vision of the scene and the facts. There is suggestive landscape background, drawn with almost absolute local accuracy. And, with the exception of Hunt's Scapegoat and the Finding in the Temple, his may perhaps be called the only modern picture of note whose impressiveness is greatly aided by union

of correctness and imaginative power in its landscape. Compare the pale red granite of Sinai, all glowing with yellow sunrise, as Mr. Herbert gives it in literal truth<sup>1</sup>, with the following true description of Claude's 'Golden Calf';—'Modern Painters,' vol. v. p. 251:—

'The scene is nearly the same as that of the St. George (wood, a river side, a fountain, and rich foreground vegetation); but, in order better to express the desert of Sinai, the river is much larger, and the trees and vegetation softer. Two people, uninterested in the idolatrous ceremonies, are rowing in a pleasure-boat on the river. The Calf is about sixteen inches long (perhaps we ought to give Claude credit for remembering that it was made of earrings, though he might as well have enquired how large Egyptian earrings were). Aaron has put it on a handsome pillar, under which five people are dancing, and twenty-eight, with several children, worshipping. Refreshments for the dancers are provided in four large vases under a tree on the left, presided over by a dignified person, holding a dog in a leash. Under the distant group of trees appears Moses, conducted by some younger personage (Nadab or Abihu). This younger personage holds up his hands; and Moses, in the way usually expected of him, breaks the tables of the Law, which are as large as an ordinary octavo volume.'

This kind of Art is obviously and altogether nugatory, as far as historical instruction goes. But really historical representations of events will be of great value in teaching any history. And the value of such means is admitted by historians, not only in word, but by example. Word-painting is used to the utmost in all

<sup>1</sup> The actual scene of that event is, in all human probability, at least within sight of the spot which our countryman has chosen.

modern histories since Carlyle: works like 'Smith's Dictionary,' and Rawlinson's 'Herodotus,' cannot dispense with woodcut illustration, though it certainly is of a mild and general character: Mr. Froude and Professor Kingsley strain every nerve in descriptions of gesture, emotion, facial expression, minor but significant detail of dress or manners: they are felt to be right so far, in spite of keen criticism. And yet painters will not take the hints so broadly given, and apply themselves to teach history on canvas, or, better still, in fresco. Of course it is because they cannot get a chance of remuneration—scarcely can they find an opportunity of shewing what they can do. Mr. Watts' offer to a Railway Company is mentioned in his evidence; nor was that the only offer generously made by him, and rejected, with or without thanks. And all the while the railway-stations are adorned with illustrations of the good effects of Thorley's Cattle Food, Milner's Patent Safes, and some other gentleman's Perambulators, Warranted to make Home Happy.

These great works are paid for; and advertising Art does something, in that it pays for itself. Still, the spaces of wall in railway-stations are very large and dreary. And every one who has waited for the train at Coventry or elsewhere, will, we think, agree with us that, allowing the rights of Thorley's Food and Milner's Safes to places on the line, large spaces above are still left, to be covered, we trust, by bold and rapid fresco in time to come. Our own generation, of all things, most needs high thought, and especially to be reminded of its own past. It has certainly forgotten its

own history;—to an extent utterly undreamed of by any Western race which ever had such a story of glory by land and sea to tell. It is not only the Sacred Histories which men doubt of: though it is about them only, from their paramount importance, that men express their doubts. On secular history their minds are quiescent, and rest in the scepticism of oblivion. Almost everybody has read the history of England, to a certain extent, in his youth; and everybody, without exception, may be supposed to have read the ‘Arabian Nights’ and ‘Robinson Crusoe.’ And most men in English middle life, if they examined their own minds, and told us the results ‘sans phrase,’ would confess that the three histories in question seem about equally real to them. One main reason is, that the fictions are associated in their minds with illustrative pictures, while the true histories, probably, are not. Perhaps more of us have had in the imaginations of our childhood a better idea of what a genie may be like than we ever had or shall have of what an English archer of Crecy or Agincourt really was like: and it is on representations of the ordinary facts of history that popular Historical Art, such as Messrs. Watts and Armitage propose for us, will take its stand. They have shewn that it is practicable: our own concern with it is, that of all means of general education, it is easiest and most elevating. The most careless eyes are daily opening more widely to the necessity of finding some means of raising the hearts and spirits of those who suffer morally by continual labour of trade or production. It is felt more and more how grievously the worlds of Thought and Feeling are closed to so many



of the middle and lower classes, who live stupified between gain, labour, and want, all without fault of their own. No means of instruction should be neglected; and to instruct laborious, distracted, or depressed people, one must take the easiest means, or none—means, if possible, which are pleasant and interesting to use. We have tried to point to the study of Pictorial Art as a means of popular education in two ways: by its practical training, and by its results; by the interest, the enjoyment, and the mental and spiritual development it affords, when studied for its own sake, or even when used, among other means of education, for training of mind, hand, and eye. Further, we have pointed, on better authority than our own, to the way in which works done by ordinarily good students of Art may react on education; shewing that people really can be informed by means of the imagination through the eye, by pictures which consist of painted symbols, independently of books which consist of written symbols: and we have said something of the need of such teaching in our own time. We do not describe the indescribable, and consequently we have nothing to say, after all, of the real delight of the pursuit of Truth and Beauty; that is to say, of the effort to set on canvas or paper some true and beautiful image of one's own. Perhaps it is not a delight, but an effort: at all events, he who has once had any share of success in it will hardly give up the thought of more. True observers and imitators are like Tennyson's enchanted crew: they cannot exactly say what they follow; or they will not commit themselves before men whose wit



is too trenchant for them; or they scorn to speak except by deeds. They are a taciturn or incoherent body.

‘But each man murmurs, O my Queen,  
I follow, till I make thee mine.’

And sometimes they keep their word.

### CHAP. III.

## HISTORICAL.

### I.

#### EARLIEST CHRISTIAN ART.

A REGULAR History of Art must, we suppose, be always in danger of becoming an immense series of biographies. It has been said of all history, that it consists of the lives of the great men who have moulded the destinies of mankind, and have, so to speak, made and modified the course of events. Whatever may be said in favour of this view of the records of mankind in general, human progress in Art is evidently marked by the names, and dependent on the thoughts, of the great painters or sculptors who have arisen at different periods. Their influence over men is more subtle and lasting than the rule of kings or tetrarchs, and their special characteristics are of more importance to the Art-historian. But in a small volume intended for practical purposes it is quite impossible to give an abridgment of Vasari; and the only names we can mention are those of men who may be said to survive, in their principles and followers, to the present day. At the same time there are tracts of the history of Art which are, so to speak, unmarked by great names, but which are of the greatest importance to both painters and critics, because they indicate national character rather than individual genius. It would not add much to the value of the

carvings in S. Ambrogio at Milan, or San Fermo at Verona, if we knew the rough Lombard names of their designers. Yet they are the most important monuments in existence of the early artistic or representative energy of the Gothic mind. The fact that all the paintings and bas-reliefs of the Catacombs are the work of hands unknown and unthought of, adds not a little to their impressiveness. These are the beginnings of Christian Art, Gothic and Roman; the Gothic Schools of course deriving much from Greek or Italian instructors, but having a life and energy of their own, which soon carried them to a level with their masters in skill of execution, while from the first they had been greatly superior in power and ability of conception.

Christian Art we describe as the Art of Christian men; Art itself we define as the pursuit of Beauty and of Truth, or that continued attempt to express and produce and multiply ideas of Truth and Beauty which seems to be natural to all well-developed races of men. The representative Arts of Painting and Sculpture produce true ideas, with the adjunct of Beauty, by lines and colours. Poetry creates them by means of words, which are invested with what we call Beauty by analogy. The term Beauty may be applied, by nearer or more distant analogies, to anything which is well-developed, complete, or excellent in its kind. Pug-dogs are capable of perfection, and a sort of charm attaches to various kinds of china. 'Surgeons,' says De Quincey, 'may speak of a beautiful cut, or a beautiful ulcer, superbly defined and running regularly through all its stages:' and he himself, with immense humour, inves-

tigates the æsthetic perfections of Murder ‘considered as one of the Fine Arts.’

But to whatever subject the term Beauty may be applied, properly or improperly, we deal only with the history of those who have practically tried to produce something beautiful to the sight in a creative way: these are painters and sculptors. A history of the analytic pursuit of the right definition of Beauty, or of the right way of accounting for it, would lead into a series of the most difficult metaphysical discussions that have ever been recorded, from Plato to M. Jouffroy.

Creative, or practical, Art begins with Egypt and Assyria, though the name which marks its speedy rise to what is in many respects its greatest height, is that of Phidias, the friend of Pericles and of Æschylus. However derived from their first sources on the Nile and the Euphrates, our technical knowledge, and many of our inspirations in all Drawing, Carving, and Colour, come to us from Greece through Rome. Our history of Art here means the history of that kind of Art which we ought to pursue ourselves, or rather of the highest and best and most progressive lines of Art-work which are now possible for us to pursue. Practically, as will be seen in our Second Part, all elementary instruction centres in the correct drawing of the human figure: and as the Greek exemplars of the form of man and woman are never likely to be superseded or dispensed with, the Art-training of our own days is derived from Phidias absolutely. But the impulse to the pursuit of Art, the painter’s temperament in our own days, is not derived from the study of ancient models, so much as from the love of Nature.

The keenest student still knows in his heart, or remembers a time when he felt, that it is pleasanter to draw leaves or flowers than casts of statues. Goëthe's failures were caused, in all probability, by his having betaken himself to academical study, rather than to the attempt to make records of that natural beauty of which his mind was full. And some comparison of the two forms and systems of Art, Greek and Gothic, is necessary to the sketch we are undertaking.

The Teutonic or Western races received instruction from the Eastern (the Greeks having the roots of their learning struck in Egypt and Assyria) through two Renaissances, Recoveries, or Rediscoveries of ancient knowledge or works of beauty. The first of these, which was purely Christian, may be called the Byzantine Renaissance. It may be said to have been the gradual reproduction and progressive imitation of such means and works of Art as had been preserved in convents, catacombs, sacred MSS, and elsewhere, during the long desolations of Greece and Italy, when the whole civilization of the old races perished with the later Empire. And as the principal refuge for those who kept some traditions of the painter's knowledge was at the centre of the surviving Eastern Empire of Rome, the School of Art so preserved was called Byzantine, or of Constantinople, when it revived again in Italy. 'The early and total decay of Art,' says the Marquis of Lothian, 'seems to have followed that of the Roman Empire in Italy at the distance of about fifty years; and there came a time, at the close of the sixth century, when the lamp of Art seemed to have entirely gone out. It had been kept up by the Church long after the



Empire had fallen. The requirements of religion for churches, baptisteries, &c, which the old temples could not satisfy, gave birth to somewhat of a new order of architecture, and painting and sculpture were supplied with a new class of subjects, and animated with a new spirit.' Some late discoveries<sup>1</sup> in the Roman Catacombs illustrate the latter part of this observation very remarkably. Not only were Christian painters filled with a new energy in the desire to dedicate their Art to the Faith, but they seem to have struck out new lines of thought in representing the myths of the earlier days as symbolical of the events of the Gospel history. They made use, without scruple or ceremony, of Pagan emblems in aid of Christian symbolism. They knew by their own memories that other men's were pre-occupied by the old myths, and their new-found faith might rule their wills and hopes, but did not sponge out the recollections of their childhood; nor did they feel anxious that it should, or less Christians in heart if it did not.

For aught we know, men like St. Paul may have seen in the heroic legends a kind of witness to the heathen of God's care for them. But that Christian painters copied or used remembrances of Pagan figures for Christian purposes there can be no doubt. They sought by every means to set before men's eyes the facts of the Faith or the images of its founders; and they did their best, calling all means to their aid. They used Pagan emblems and ideals as freely as they

<sup>1</sup> By De Rossi. The works of Raoul Rochette and Didron are well known. For other authorities, see an Article in the *Contemporary Review*, vol. iii. p. 153.

used Pagan paint and brushes. M. Raoul Rochette instances a figure of the Madonna, from a very early sarcophagus, much superior, as a work of Art, to Christian paintings of the same date. It so closely resembles some ancient figures of Penelope, as to seem almost taken from them. The earlier Christian work seems to have been the work of men desirous to make progress. They not only dedicated their labour in the spirit of the believer, but sought to make it ever more and more worthy of dedication in itself, in the spirit of the artist. Whether Christian artists looked on the tales of Deucalion and Hercules as foreshadowings of the truth in heathen minds, or not, they made use of them. The pictures of Noah in the Catacombs present an exact analogy with the medals of Septimius Severus, stamped with the deluge of Deucalion. The history of Jonah is perhaps the most frequently chosen subject of all the types of the Old Testament. No doubt our Lord's reference to it, as a type of the Resurrection, accounts for this. But the history and its representations are strangely connected with those of Hercules, Jason, Hesione, and Andromeda. Of these fables, the last in particular had for its scene the coast and city of Joppa, and was thus on common ground with Jonah's history. Those who were actually under persecution and in danger of life seem to have had no scruple in adapting the ideals and emblems of well-taught Paganism, the better to represent the actual deeds of saints and prophets, and the facts of Holy Scripture. Such emblems and myths were matters of Art, and part of the painter's stock-in-trade: and, all Christian as he was, he used them like the tools of his craft.

As has been implied, in the present attempt at Art-history, we are only trying to give a sketch of the successive applications of Painting to its highest function of instruction, and of the effects produced by some of the great men who have advanced it by their personal genius, and guided their successors in its pursuit. Now Modern Art, chronologically at least, begins with Christian Art: and we find sculpture and painting specially applied to religious instruction from the very first; religious instruction forming the chief part of education. We may suppose, of course, that Art was used in the same way for all manner of record and teaching: but all Art, from the time of Egypt and Assyria, consisted mainly in either historical or symbolic representations of the spiritual history and relations of man; and the temples of man's worship were the centres of sculpture and colour.

Before great names were known in Christian Art, we find it used either to teach the history of the Faith and of man by direct representation, or by symbolic representation. And we look upon Art as a means of teaching and part of right education at this day, and think that its old and continually employed way of instruction by fresco ought to be revived. So that it is part of our purpose to call attention to the frank realism and naturalism, and free use of all attainable means of Art-teaching, which are found from the very beginnings of Christian work. The relics of two such beginnings are partly preserved for us: one, the work of the Catacombs and early Christian sepulchres; the other, the first productions of Gothic or Northern hands in Lombard churches. In both of them, as is usual,

sculpture was in advance of painting, its early stages being easier than those of painting, and its materials rougher and more permanent. Some of the earliest Lombard carvings in S. Ambrogio at Milan are, indeed, as Mr. Ruskin has called them, drawings in marble, depending on deeply-cut outlines: just as in the far-distant ages, Egyptian sculpture owes so much of its power to extraordinary skill in outline form; while the shallow cutting and consequent solidity of its bas-reliefs make them almost imperishable.

The reasons are obvious why Christian Art, as early as the third and fourth centuries, was beginning to assume a religious aspect in the narrower sense of the term religious, that is to say, in the conventual or ascetic sense. The whole Church, the whole Christian mind, was taking an ascetic form, under stress of persecution without and corruption within. Mr. Lecky describes the change of Christian Art from its more cheerful to its severer phases, though he places the time of the modification as late as the tenth century. He speaks of the cheerfulness of early Christian Art as follows:—

‘The places that were decorated were the Catacombs; the chapels were all surrounded by the dead; the altar upon which the sacred mysteries were celebrated was the tomb of a martyr . . . it would seem but natural that the great and terrible scenes of Christian vengeance should be depicted. Yet nothing of this kind appears in the Catacombs; with two doubtful exceptions, there are no representations of martyrdoms. Daniel unharmed amid the lions, the unaccomplished sacrifice of Isaac, the three children unscathed among the flames, and St. Peter led to prison, are the only images that reveal the horrible persecution that was raging. There was no disposition to perpetuate forms of suffering; no ebullition of bitterness or complaint; no thirsting for vengeance.



Neither the Crucifixion, nor any of the scenes of the Passion, were ever represented; nor was the Day of Judgment; nor were the sufferings of the lost. The wreaths of flowers, in which Paganism delighted, and even some of the more joyous images of the Pagan mythology, were still retained, and were mingled with all the most beautiful emblems of Christian hope, and with representations of many of the miracles of mercy.

‘After the tenth century,’ he says, ‘the Good Shepherd, which adorns almost every chapel in the Catacombs, is no more seen; the miracles of mercy cease to be represented, and are replaced by the details of the Passion, and the terrors of the Last Judgment. The countenance of Christ became sterner, older, and more mournful. About the twelfth century this change becomes almost universal. From this period, writes one of the most learned of modern archæologists, Christ appears more and more melancholy, and often truly terrible. It is indeed the *Rex tremendæ majestatis* of our *Dies Iræ*.’

This seems to require some partial limitations. All is perfectly true as to the more cheerful and hopeful purport of the earlier decorations of the Catacombs; executed as they were by men under no conventual vows, and before corruption within the Church and wide national ruin had been added to external persecution. But the effect on religious Art of the monastic view of life must have begun to be perceptible very soon after the establishment of the earliest convents in Egypt and the East. Indeed, and specially as to representations of our Lord, very early Byzantine pictures of Him convey a strong impression of melancholy and even severity. The view taken of Him by Eastern Art was very early the view of the Eastern Anchorite. This may be proved at Venice, the meeting-place of the East and West for many successive



centuries. Torcello, the mother city, still retains the ancient Mosaic of its Duomo: and neither that building nor its original ornaments can be of much later date than the first settlement of the people of Altinum in the islands of the Lagune, on the destruction of that city, with Aquileia and Padua, by Attila in 452<sup>1</sup>. The Last Judgment of Torcello will be familiar to many travellers; and its strange representation of the Lake of Fire, as a red stream proceeding from under the throne of the Judge, is a terrible image which points onwards to the tremendous imagination of Orcagna, the Dante of Painting. Byzantine Art, as has been said, is always touched with the spirit of Eastern asceticism, and the same traditional features and treatment may be seen to this day in the mosaics of Mount Sinai, which date from Justinian<sup>2</sup>, as in the perhaps yet older works of Torcello. The first restoration of Art to Italy may be said to date from the conquests of Belisarius; and it has influenced Cimabue and Angelico, Francia and Perugino, and the early mind of Rafael. It seems to be from the first the work of men, who were conscious of great and deserved punishment in this world, yet were appealing against the reign of earthly evil; and its typical figure is, perhaps, the Murano mosaic of 'the sad Madonna, her tears falling as her hands are raised to bless<sup>3</sup>.' From the ashes of the Empire sprang the first faint 'Renaissance' of painting in the Western World—preceded by that architecture which sprang into its chief glory at Pisa, as soon as Teu-

<sup>1</sup> Gibbon, vol. iii. 274, Milman.

<sup>2</sup> Began to reign A.D. 527.

<sup>3</sup> The Stones of Venice, vol. ii. 2.

tonic pupils were found capable of doing justice to the Byzantine sense of beauty. 'As architecture was the Art which last retained its vitality,' says Lord Lothian, 'so it was the first to rise to a new life. As early as the ninth and tenth centuries, the forms of Rome and Byzantium, fused together and touched with the spirit of the Teutonic nations, gave rise to a new style. About A.D. 1050 the Pisan fleet took Palermo. With their spoil they resolved to build a cathedral worthy of the State and the occasion. Buschetto was their architect, and his work stands yet unchanged.' Within the walls of the Campo Santo the bones of Crusaders rest in the soil they won. They brought the sacred earth of Jerusalem in their galleys year by year, to make therein their place of rest; ἔχοντας ἔκρυψεν<sup>1</sup>, as the Trojan soil hides Achilles. Round them stand their cathedral and their baptistery, and the leaning Campanile: and on the walls which surround their graves are the frescoes of Giotto, and Orcagna, and Benozzo Gozzoli. In Venice only, if anywhere, are such treasures of beauty and such a mine of study for artist or historian to be found within the same space: and the painter who goes to learn his work at Florence will do well to stay and labour long at Pisa on his way.

Byzantine Art culminates, in a sense, at Pisa. It still survives in Greek convents, from Athos to Sinai and Mar Saba<sup>2</sup>; but we cannot seek it there, and

<sup>1</sup> Æsch. Ag. 455, Dind.

<sup>2</sup> See Curzon's 'Monasteries of the Levant,' and the Rev. F. Tozer's Paper in 'Vacation Tourists;' and especially 'The Stones of Venice,' vol. ii.

must proceed to the second early revival of Art, in the original work of Teutonic hands. The first Christian Art had to expire with the ancient civilization, which even the Faith could not keep alive. Its faint relics remained in Byzantine temples, and we have to see what its traditions could do when they inspired or guided younger races in later and better days. The actual origin of Modern Art is to be seen in such churches as San Zenone and San Fermo at Verona, or in S. Ambrogio at Milan, or San Michele at Lucca. In these and other like churches are seen the beginnings of Realist Art; which does not mean, as people generally misunderstand the terms, Art applied to vulgar and every-day subject, but Art striving to represent a thing as it really is; as the painter's mind sees it through the eye or by inner vision to be;—as he is persuaded that it is, in its essence and nature. In these sculptures all the work is very imperfect in the technical point of view; and, consequently, wherever lofty or impressive subject is attempted, they become what is called grotesque. We shall have to go into the various meanings of this word, and the explanations to which it leads. For the present, let us say a subject may be grotesque by reason of the oddity of the subject chosen, or by reason of one of two imperfections of the artist's mind at the time.

1. Grotesqueness may depend on want of technical skill, or sheer lack of human power. Some subjects cannot be adequately represented, and attempts to do them justice involve either a certain amount of failure; or the use of symbolism, which confesses imperfection in man's power of conception. Thus,

to take Mr. Ruskin's example, nearly all the visions and dreams in Holy Scripture, as those of Jacob and Nebuchadnezzar, are grotesques.

2. A man may choose to look at his subject on its comic side, supposing it to have one; or can only dwell on it in a half-attentive, ironical, or humorous way; or through the light of other thoughts; or he is only capable of looking at things on their comic side. In the first case, his work belongs to the grotesque of caricature; in the second, it is the high grotesque of Dürer, or the realism of Hogarth; in the third, he is a buffoon, and his work demands no attention from us.

But we have here only to notice that the beginnings of Realist Art were grotesque of the first character quite as much as of the second. Eve and the Serpent in S. Ambrogio, or Herodias' daughter, not only dancing, but turning somersaults before Herod, are exceedingly odd in their appearance to any one who is accustomed to modern technical skill; still they are not comic in intention, but faithful attempts to represent facts believed heartily by the workman. For a principal feature of Gothic Art from the first is its Realism. That is to say, all Gothic workmen from the first wished, as they would probably have put it, to draw or carve everything as *like* the real thing as possible. When the real thing was invisible, as in a representation of a past event, the Gothic workman found out what it was like, if he could; or else strove with all his soul to form an idea of it. Also he turned away from nothing: his aims were universal. The carvers of the Lombard churches, who did the earliest work we possess, seem to have wished to represent simply everything. And



as Christianity took possession of their minds, they learned to dedicate all their early skill, and to illustrate all their lives and thoughts, by the carvings of their churches. They wrote there their thoughts of the history and hope of all men, and also their own ways and crafts, and battles and huntings: and also indulged their imaginations with all kinds of higher symbolisms, and their fancy with all kinds of sportive and eccentric combination. The germ of this is seen in the paintings of the Catacombs, though the conventual or ascetic change passed over Art so entirely, in the ages which intervened between the one class of works and the other. De Rossi says of the earlier works: 'È uno fatto che ho costantemente notato nei sotteranei cemeteri, avere i Cristiani nei primi scuoli . . . imagine del cielo cosmico, o scene di pastorizia, de agricoltura, di cacce, di giuochi. . . Obvio e notissimo è il senso parabolico dato dei Cristiani alle scene pastorali e d'agricoltura, alle personificazione delle stagioni, ai delfini e mostri marini nuotante nelle onde.'

Thus such works as the representations and personifications of months and seasons, and the labours of men, in St. Mark's and the Ducal Palace at Venice, are connected with the very first efforts of Christian Art; and the great Realist principle is asserted, of seeing serious and sacred meaning in necessary daily things. In early days, and up to the later Renaissance, to the middle period of Rafael's life, there was no specially sacred Art, for all Art was held sacred. Men took their rest in sporting with the grotesque, in sketching, and slighter work; but all their serious



works and best efforts went into subjects connected with their Faith. But to speak of Sacred Art is to enter on the subject of religious and other symbolism; and the term grotesque, as has already been shewn, extends over vast divisions of Art-work through all the modern ages. It applies less widely to painting, of course, than to illumination or decorative sculpture used for architectural ornament. Much good grotesque has been done, since the invention of printing, in steel or wood engraving.

All beginnings are humble, or they ought to be. But the first principles and practice of the study of Art given in this book, will, it is hoped, if properly used, give the student means of entering fairly on the pursuit of Realist Art, that is to say, of drawing things which he sees, *as* he sees them. If he advance no further than still life, or slight landscape, his time will be well spent if he learns to work in either well. If he has inventive genius, or that power of memory and of rearranging its images which is called Composition, and which is closely akin to Invention,—he may, we trust, still find that the rules here given him may enable him to develop his own powers. But all stands in faithful study of Nature from the first, and we have thought it worth while to notice how early a thing the choice of natural subject really is, even in works intended to adorn sacred things and places.

## II.

### SYMBOLISM AND THE GROTESQUE.


THE subjects of symbolism and the grotesque in Art are very closely connected, and appear to have been so from the earliest periods, that is to say, since language was first expressed in visible tokens. A symbol may be defined as a sign, token, or ticket, representing something not producible to the senses at a given moment. Words are defined by logicians as signs of things, or signs of ideas: however, they are held to represent things and ideas in a different way. The word, or spoken noun-substantive, first declares or makes known that the speaker is thinking about an object, and then takes the place of that object in his conversation. In speaking he appeals to the sense of hearing. He may appeal to that of sight, if he will. He may write a document describing circumstances in visible letters. He may make some visible sign or gesture without speaking. Nor is oral communication always the most effective of the three methods. It is perfectly well understood that many kinds of business where precision is required are best transacted on paper by letter-symbols; and mere gesture is of considerable import—as an artful, or only a highly intelligent, person may

intensify, or modify, or altogether reverse the meaning of what he says by his manner, or some studied bodily movement. As Mr. Dickens says, in Naples the important business of personal abuse is carried on by signs, and the Lazzaroni experience what Tennyson calls 'the delight of low replies'—entirely without speaking. 'A man raises two fingers in the air to represent asses' ears; whereby his antagonist is driven to madness'.<sup>1</sup> Obviously the sense of sight conveys sufficiently vivid ideas to the brain through letter-symbols, symbolic action, or otherwise. What we have first to notice is the relation between phonetic symbols (or letters, or alphabetic symbols) and pictorial symbols,—which latter include all representative Art, from the rudest hieroglyphics to the frescoes of the Vatican. It is not that the hieroglyphic has a right to be spoken of as Art: but as hieroglyphic is necessarily connected with the origin of Art and of letters, it is best to give a little time to tracing that original connexion.

Signs of things, to go back to our first part of logic, are either manifestative or vicarious; they either represent their object like pictures, or stand instead of it like words. A bunch of grapes at a house-door, an optician's spectacles, or a goldbeater's hammer, represent the business done within symbolically—the gladiatorial pictures outside the taverns of Pompeii represented the favourites of the arena simply. On the other hand, a five-pound-note takes the place of five sovereigns vicariously. Words, as we have said, are vicarious signs of things, but they represent or indicate ideas, or the

<sup>1</sup> 'Pictures from Italy.'

presence of conceptions in the speaker's mind. When I name an ox I indicate that I am thinking about one, and the word takes the place of the quadruped. Now, there was a time when the picture of the ox held the place of the word written; and was the only representative sign. This is the first stage of hieroglyphics, or picture-alphabets, which were the origin of all writing by letters or phonetic signs, and may be traced in the three first letters of the Hebrew alphabet very easily. Thus—

א Aleph, ox or bull, was evidently by origin , representing that animal with exaggerated horns.

ב Beth, house or booth, speaks for itself.

ג Gimel (Gamal), camel, indicates the head, and long neck, of the camel<sup>1</sup>, which are its principal points as seen in the Desert at a distance, as the present writer has often observed. The foreleg is also marked.

Of course, as ideas multiply and language grows more copious, picture-hieroglyphics fall short, and some more pliant and generally applicable medium of expression is wanted. This leads to the gradual change of the *hieroglyphic*, which more or less resembles the object, into *phonetic letters*, which neither resemble it nor are meant to do so. That change takes place as follows. The hieroglyphic is taken to stand everywhere for the initial sound of the spoken word, which already represents the thing and passes for it in conversation. ב stands henceforth for ever for B, the initial sound of the articulate word Beth; ג for G, initial sound of the

<sup>1</sup> The dromedary's trot throws forward his forelegs horizontally in the most extraordinary manner.



articulate word Gimel, &c. &c. Hence phonetic letters, which resemble the *sounds*, come to be used instead of written pictures which resemble *things*. Hence the phonetic letters can of course be used over again to construct other words and names, and are much reduced in number. Hieroglyphics may also be taken symbolically in second and third meanings, as appears from Champollion ; but we have no means of knowing how rapidly, or with what precision, ideas could be exchanged by such means. It would seem that the symbolic use of hieroglyphic-picture signs was more easy and pliable than may at first appear, as we are assured by Professor Rawlinson that it was not abandoned in Egypt till Christianity introduced the Coptic—a purely alphabetic compound of Greek and Egyptian character.

One reason for this was, no doubt, the extraordinary power of expressive outline so early attained in Egypt. Properly speaking, there is no archaic Egyptian Art-work. The Heliopolitan obelisk, and the four great sandstone tablets<sup>1</sup> which are cut in the rocks of Wady Mughara in the Sinai Desert, are supposed to be of the very earliest times of Egyptian Art: the latter are coeval with the Pyramids. For characteristic form they are unsurpassed anywhere.

‘They are good work of the oldest known school on this earth, and there are the same unsurpassed and hardly equalled outlines which one notices on the obelisk of Heliopolis—and this was a century old in the days of Joseph. The drawing of the hawks, quails, and other birds, is admirable: outline, and shallow relief, can do no more. The hawks are hawk-like to a degree; the

<sup>1</sup> A fifth is in phonetic characters.



owls are more owlish and the snakes more venomous than any I ever saw. The cobra is cut to a miracle, and the partridges run just as they will run before your camel in the desert; and exactly such cobras may you see any day, dancing on their tails in front of Shepherd's Hotel, before some half-naked Arab charming wisely<sup>1</sup>.

It will be seen that the progress from hieroglyphic to phonetic writing is one of conventionality: the earliest sign was *like* its object, as a picture, the perfected letter is like nothing on earth: the one appealed to the senses with the intellect, the other calls upon the intellect alone. Such is progress towards letters, or literature, or exchange of thought in written language. There may be an analogous advance of the rude original picture, which may become less and less conventional, and more and more like what it stands for in the mind, until strong resemblance is attained, and Realist Art is established. But letters and Realist Art arise together in the infancy of human expression. Again, it is the infancy, or let us rather say the imperfection, of man's power of expressing the thought which is in him, which is the chief cause of the use of symbolism everywhere. It is employed alike in speaking, writing, and painting. All who are accustomed to teaching can tell us the value of simile, especially in elementary instruction. They well know what numbers of trite comparisons, and cut-and-dry illustrations, they are obliged to keep by them as stock-in-trade. It is remarked, again, how great use is made by savage orators of trope and figure; and civilized people who are

<sup>1</sup> Article on Sinai, 'Vacation Tourists,' 1862. (Macmillan.) See also Rawlinson's Herodotus, App. Book II. (vol. ii.)

unaccustomed to express themselves, or are uneducated, or happen to be dealing with matters which they do not perfectly understand, are always having recourse to similes, if they have ingenuity enough to frame them. In short, symbolism is one great means of expressing imperfect thought or incomplete conception. It is virtually an appeal from one mind to another for assistance or fellowship: the speaker confesses himself unable to unwind a length of thread, and tries to throw the ball over to his friend that he may unravel some more. This gives us a definition of symbolism—the attempt to suggest higher, wider, deeper or more complicated ideas by the use of others which are simpler and more familiar. Hence comes the necessary connexion between symbolism and the grotesque. Symbolic expression (especially by painting and sculpture) confesses imperfection and inability, and imperfection and inability are almost always grotesque, in the popular sense of the word<sup>1</sup>. At all events, contrast of the sublime and its contrary, and of higher and lower forms of nature, has a great deal to do with the grotesque; as has also the contrast of humanity in its loftier, or in its more ignoble conditions. But this subject would require a whole treatise on Humour, and its expression in the more serious Caricature.

The symbolical attempt to represent subjects which

<sup>1</sup> The word 'grotesque' itself, we believe, is an Italian adjective of late origin, connected with the idea of caverns and hollows, in which ancient and strange sculptures may have been found. We are inclined to conjecture also that it is connected with the traditional shapes of Pan and the Fauns, and other cavern-haunting figures which combined and contrasted noble and ignoble forms.

are beyond the possibility of literal representation is almost invariably odd or strange-looking. And the feeling of contrast between the greatness of the subject and the weakness or want of skill shewn by the artist is often amusing, though of course all minds, except those of the coarsest and most contemptible frame, will see and sympathize with keen or tumultuous feeling in the workman, and will understand that work may be ludicrous to a degree even because of its serious intention, and yet command respect from that quality, if it be pure and genuine. All the attempts made in early Art to represent the visions and the inconceivable events spoken of in Holy Scripture are grotesques; because it is impossible to convey to the mind a real impression of what was seen in vision, or often of an event which actually happened. Pharaoh's dreams of the fat and lean kine and the full and blighted ears of wheat have been mentioned, as attempted in early Gothic Art. The result is literal grotesque. The well-known representations of the four Evangelists are symbolic grotesques. All early representations of the Last Judgment, whether Gothic or Byzantine, are grotesque, from necessary inability to grapple with the subject. That of the Sistine is the Titanic grotesque of surpassing technical skill, and vigour of mind and mood, making a great attempt in its own strength, and succeeding at least in shewing its own power, and the tumultuous emotions of one of the greatest of men in dealing with an inconceivable subject. One picture, Tintoret's Last Judgment in the church of the Madonna dell' Orto at Venice, may be said to stand before others in the vastness of its conception

of a subject which no human imagination can really approach; and we are at a loss how to characterize or classify it. We must leave the reader to Mr. Ruskin's great description of this work in the second volume of 'Modern Painters'—and ask every traveller to verify it, while the canvas remains decipherable on the desolate wall of St. Mary of the Garden.

Like all other human means of aspiration, Art is imperfect, and falls short, when it seeks its highest objects: and the artist may treat his admitted and necessary inability in one of two ways, when he has to express what is above him: as may also the writer who has to deal with ideas of the incomprehensible. Either of them may try to realize the event or idea, owning his inability; or may describe his imagination of it, confessing his weakness. Or he may use a purely symbolic and entirely conventional type of his thought in painting or in words. The name of God not being to be used without grave reason, we speak of Him as the Lord, or the Blessed Trinity, using a verbal symbol for ordinary purposes. In older religious painting and sculpture, His presence was always represented by the hand with fingers raised in blessing; or later by the triangle, which points to the fundamental doctrine of the Faith. These are pictorial symbols in their earliest form; distinguishable from hieroglyphics by the facts that they did not originate from mere imitation of visible objects, and are not liable to lose their special significance and become mere letters.

The earlier Christian symbols most in use were the Good Shepherd, which De Rossi considers the earliest of all;—also the Fish as typical of the Christian, one



of the draught of the Church's net; the Vine, Lamb, and Olive, and the Lion, Dragon, and Serpent. These are all Scriptural in their origin. Besides these, there are the early non-Scriptural emblems:—the Fish as an anagram, for our Lord: the Ship of Souls, in emblematic painting and also in Church architecture, as at Torcello: the Dove, Anchor, and Lyre; the Palm-branch, Phoenix, Peacock, and Pelican. The Cross has been of course the emblem of all the Christian life and creed from the earliest times. These and some few similar representations of symbolic persons, as Jonah and other prophets, make up the earlier range of Christian imagery, the fear of Gnosticism and of idolatry alike preventing much more; though, as our quotations in the last Chapter prove, a much wider choice of subject was allowed for pastime, or indeed to adorn buildings or catacombs, and to accompany the more significant pictures. But these remnants of the skill and sense of beauty, which Christianity had inherited from Greece and Rome, either perished, or were preserved in convents and churches;—hence of course the not only Christian, but specially religious or ascetic form which the first revival of Art assumed. We have already spoken of that revival as the Byzantine Renaissance, for want of a better title, and mentioned that the name Byzantine probably dates from the partial recovery of Italy by Belisarius. The architecture of Pisa combines Greek and Teutonic elements, and the frescoes of Orcagna in the same place are impressed with the severity of Eastern thought. Torcello and Ravenna are the principal seats of Byzantine mosaic. We are speaking, of course, of Italian remains



only, and setting aside the importance of St. Sophia in architecture, and of the curious mosaics or paintings of Mount Sinai, Mount Athos, and Mar Saba.

Byzantine Art may be said to have been a sort of training-school for Gothic—a school where Teutonic workmen learnt to read and write from Nature, and from which they broke away early, yet not without



FIG. 1.

good early lessons of energy, and often of devotion. There is a beautiful book by M. le Comte Bastard, called simply '*Peintures des Manuscrits*,' published for the Bibliothèque Royale at Paris. It is a splendid set of copies of MSS. from the eighth century downwards; and we have never before seen a series of examples in which the origin and growth of Gothic Naturalism,

out of the old stock of Roman or Byzantine work, can be so well traced. Some of the earliest eighth-century initial letters seem to be by Byzantine hands, and are strangely formed of birds, animals and fishes, quaintly



FIG. 2.

arranged, as on old-fashioned dinner-plates, but without the least sense of Nature. That is the old conventional, and, in fact, degraded work, as in Fig. 1<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Fig. 1. Byzantine Lion ;—utterly *unprogressive* Art, though quaint.

Fig. 2. No. 3. Frankish Warrior ;—utterly uninstructed Art.

„ No. 2. Lombard-Gothic Grotesque ; observe the *seat* of the rider.

„ No. 4. Cock, of advanced Realist character ; about fifty years later than No. 3.

Mr. Ruskin's more salient and piquant example must follow here, in contrast with the earliest pure Teutonic.

FIG. 3.

*Angel from Psalter of eighth century, St. John's College, Cambridge.*

'You see the characteristics of this utterly dead school are, first, the wilful closing of its eyes to natural facts; for however ignorant a person may be, he need only look at a human being to see that it has a mouth as well as eyes: and secondly, the endeavour to adorn or idealize natural fact according to its own



FIG. 3.

notions: it puts red spots in the middle of the hands, and sharpens the thumbs, thinking to improve them. You will also admire the exquisite result of the application of our great architectural principle of beauty—symmetry, or equal balance of part by part. You see even the eyes are made symmetrical—entirely round instead of irregularly oval; and the iris is set properly in the middle, instead of—as nature has put it—rather under the upper lid. You will also observe the “principle of the Pyramid” in the general arrangement of the figure, and the value of “series” in the placing of the dots.

'From this dead barbarism we pass to living barbarism—to work done by hands quite as rude, if not ruder, and by minds as uninformed: and yet work which in every line of it is prophetic of power, and has in it the sure dawn of day. You have often heard it said that Giotto was the founder of Art in Italy. He was not: neither he, nor Giunta Pisano, nor Niccolo Pisano. They all laid strong hands to the work, and brought it first into aspect above ground: but the foundation had been laid for them by the builders of the Lombardic Churches in the valleys of the Adda and the Arno. It is in the sculpture of the round-arched churches of North Italy, bearing disputable dates ranging

from the eighth to the twelfth century, that you will find the lowest-struck roots of the art of Titian and Rafael . . . . Remember, therefore, for a moment, as characteristic of culminating Italian Art, Michael Angelo's fresco of the Temptation of Eve, in the Sistine Chapel; and you will be more interested in seeing the birth of Italian Art, illustrated by the same subject, from S. Ambrogio, of Milan,—the Serpent beguiling Eve, Fig. 4.



FIG. 4.

In that sketch, ludicrous as it is, you have the elements of life in their first form. The people who could do that were sure to get on. For observe, the workman's whole aim is straight at the facts, as well as he can get them; and not merely at the facts, but at the very heart of the facts. A common workman might have looked at nature for his serpent, but he would have thought only of its scales. But this fellow does not want scales, nor coils; he can do without them: he wants the serpent's heart—malice and insinuation; and he has actually got them to some extent. So also a common workman, even in this barbarous stage of Art, might have carved Eve's arms and body a good deal better; but this man does not care about arms and body, if he can only get at Eve's mind—shew that she is pleased at being flattered, and yet in a state of uncomfortable hesitation. And some look of listening, of complacency, and of embarrassment, he has verily got: note the eyes slightly askance, the lips compressed, and the right hand nervously grasping the left arm. Nothing can be

declared impossible to the people who can begin thus; nothing is possible to the man who did the symmetrical angel.'

But in Count Bastard's work<sup>1</sup> the change from the dying Byzantine to the new-born Lombard work is most interesting. There are plenty of nondescript beasts, but they have a life in them:—there are riders (on horseback rarely, on the back of inconceivable monsters everywhere), and they who painted them knew all which has to do with equitation. The seat of the quaint red and green riders in pointed basnets and mail-shirts is like that of the Knights of Athens in the Elgin frieze. Then there are beasts of chase; in short, Naturalism has fairly set in—accompanied by a great deal of wildness and humour, and so much the more unlike the older Byzantine work which held such power over the minds of Giotto and Orcagna, and whose principal characteristic is 'dreadful earnestness.'

For where Byzantine work is grotesque, it is because men had no better knowledge or power of drawing on walls or panels the great and awful subjects which filled and overpowered their minds. We have already quoted Mr. Lecky's important and valuable remarks on the increased severity of their work; arising as it did from the depression of continued suffering, and such views of the dreadful struggles of the times as men of a failing race might take, who saw no hope of victory in this world. Byzantine ornament is better named beautifully or grimly conventional, than grotesque.

Now that our ornamental trades require constant supplies of models, it seems best that they should

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 64, 65.



be sought in, or rather studied from, good examples of Byzantine work, such as are given in 'The Stones of Venice,' for instance. All admit that ornament should be conventionalized;—to a greater or a less degree, it is true; but always in a marked manner: and the tendency of our artist-workmen is perhaps to attempt too direct copying from Nature in their carvings. 'It is not quite enough to stick two leaves together stalk to stalk and call it a pattern.' Power of composition may be shewn as much in ornamental design as in anything else, and though that power is to a great extent natural and innate, and though the words 'power of composition' almost amount to an expression for general artistic power;—still there is no doubt that study of good models will expand any kind or amount of natural gift quite indefinitely.

As has been said, all Northern, or Gothic, or Teutonic work is grotesque in its early stages for two reasons, or for one of them. In the first place, the artist wished to represent almost everything he saw or thought of, and was unequal to the task; and in the second, he had a strong tendency to laugh at things, either with genuine enjoyment, or with bitterness. In other words, the naturalism and the humour of Gothic Art distinguishes it from Byzantine or earlier Christian work. Before we come to the times when men of great power, like Cimabue and Giotto, advanced Gothic Naturalism in its struggle with nature, to greater success in representation, so leading the way into actual realist Art, we have some further remarks to make on different uses of pictorial symbolism, which retain more or less interest or influence for our own days.

1. Heraldic symbolism has little to do with modern Art, though its history is closely connected with that of the earliest works we know. Heraldry takes its origin from the first adoption by men of a symbol-picture, or hieroglyphic, to personify and represent them; to indicate the qualities they admired, or conceived themselves to possess. It was not material whether they attributed them to their gods or to themselves, since the gods of early and rude ages are always in great measure ideal representations of such human qualities or passions as men of an early period of thought most admired. The hawks and asps of Egypt are symbolic ideals; still more remarkable, as such, are the Ninevite bulls and eagles: connected as they undoubtedly are with the typical cherubic forms which were permitted under the Jewish dispensation. These are related again to the Veronese griffins of San Fermo and San Zenone. There can be no doubt of the truth of Mr. Ruskin's view, that their sculptor's mind dwelt on the visions of Ezekiel and the Apocalypse. And there is great interest in comparing his account of the typical griffins of Verona with the able article by Mr. Henry Hayman in Smith's Dictionary, s.v. 'Cherub'—so great that we cannot well avoid giving some parallel extracts from both writers. Mr. Ruskin's work is the earlier in point of time, but Mr. Hayman evidently has not referred to it, and the coincidences in their remarks are striking. 'On the whole,' says the latter writer, 'it seems likely that the word "cherub" meant not only the composite creature-form, of which the man, lion, ox, and eagle were the elements; but, further, some peculiar and mystical

form, which Ezekiel, being a priest, would know and recognize as "the face of a cherub," *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, but which was kept secret from all others . . . Such were probably those on the ark, (which, when moved, was always covered)—though those on the hangings and panels might be of the popular device.' 'The griffin of northern fable watching the gold in the wilderness has been compared with the cherub, both as regards his composite form and his function as guardian of a treasure.' He goes on to point out the possible affinity between the Greek name *γρύπ* (*γρύψ*, gryps, griffin), and the Hebrew and Arabic derivation of the word 'cherub,' which gives it the original meaning of 'carved image,' and says, that though the exact form is uncertain, it must have borne a general resemblance to the composite religious figures found upon the monuments of Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, and Persia.

Mr. Ruskin (in 'Modern Painters,' vol. iii. ch. 8) gives two examples of ancient and modern grotesque, to illustrate the absence and the presence of vivid imaginative power in an artist's mind. He chooses two ideals of the emblematic griffin, the Classical and the Gothic: the former from the frieze of the Roman temple of Antoninus and Faustina, the latter from the front of the Duomo of Verona. His illustrations and his analysis of the two works, shew conclusively that the Lombard carving, though rough and imperfect, is full of meaning and expression, while the Roman is emblematic of nothing, though very gracefully and skilfully composed, and unexceptionable as work of unmeaning ornament. He then points out that the Lombard carver was enabled to form so intense a conception mainly

by the fact that his griffin is a great and profoundly-felt symbolism. Two wheels are under its eagle's wings, which connect it with the living creatures of the vision of Ezekiel. 'Where they went, the wheels went by them, and whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, and the wheels were lifted up over against them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.' 'The winged shape thus becomes at once one of the acknowledged symbols of the divine power; and in its unity of lion and eagle, the workman of the middle ages always meant to set forth the unity of the human and divine nature.' Elsewhere, we think in 'The Stones of Venice,' the connexion is pointed out between the Assyrian and the Gothic personifications—nor can any example be more complete, of parallelism in artistic work, used for its most solemn purpose. The presence of the cherubic form in the Temple points to a distinction we shall notice further on. The symbolic use of images of living creatures was permitted under the Mosaic dispensation in that instance. And on this will be found to turn the distinction between symbolic use of painting and sculpture in church architecture and decoration, and its forbidden and dangerous use, as a supposed means of assisting devotion.

It is evident that personifications of this kind are the origin, first, of the heraldry of human war and power; then of the higher symbolism of religious Art in all ages; and finally, of such church decoration as some of us may yet hope to see carried out in our own. The earliest example of pure heraldry, or individual choice of a bearing or device, is probably to be found in Æschylus's 'Septem contra Thebas.' Telamon and Capa-



neus each have their blazon, and this would seem to shew that Æschylus thought heraldry not inappropriate to the generation before the siege of Troy. We do not remember any heraldry in Homer: at least Priam's dialogue with Helen, when they look forth from above the Scaean gate<sup>1</sup>, would seem to prove that the chiefs of Achaia were not distinguished by their shields, or by any *recognizance*, so as really to be known from afar; for of course heraldry in its origin was a matter of war-like service, not of mere sport or pride. A man might choose a device for a tournament, and call himself the Knight of the Bleeding Heart, or Questing Beast, or Rueful Countenance: but in battle his retainers must ride under the banner of his house, and he would be known by his own *cognizance*;—by the crest on his helmet, and the rude pictures on his shield and surcoat, which all men knew belonged to his name, and indicated his presence; which were just as much his property as his sword or his purse; and which were a matter of military and public convenience to all men, friends and enemies. Both on the march and in line of battle it was highly necessary in the earlier days of personal prowess to see where each leader of men fought; and that would be known by his broad banner or swallow-tailed pennon<sup>2</sup>. We have been of course anticipated

<sup>1</sup> Hom. Il. iii. 165 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> See Marmion, Canto vi. 26 [a virtually parallel passage to that in the Iliad] :—

‘At length the freshening western blast  
 Aside the shroud of battle cast;  
 And first the ridge of mingled spears  
 Above the brightening cloud appears;



in all this; but it seems to prove that heraldry is really a post-Homeric institution. Perhaps the boast of the Epigoni, that they were far better men than their fathers, the heraldic Seven, who fell before Thebes instead of taking her, may have influenced the besiegers of Troy-Town: in any case, whether it was Homeric or not, a heraldry exactly like that of the middle ages, and employed it would seem for exactly the same reasons, was a familiar idea to Æschylus<sup>1</sup>. For Teutonic historical symbolisms, the red and the white dragon of Cymry and Saxon, the horse of Hengist, and above all the Danish Raven, the Landeyda or Ravager of the World, will be easily remembered<sup>2</sup>. The Dean of Westminster refers to Oreb and Zeb, 'the Raven and the Wolf,' as a parallel example in the East;

And in the smoke the pennons flew,  
 As in the storm the white sea-mew.  
 Then marked they, dashing broad and far,  
 The broken billows of the war,  
 And plumed crests of chieftains brave . . .  
 . . Amid the scene of tumult, high  
 They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly;  
 And stainless Tunstall's banner white,  
 And Edmund Howard's lion bright.'

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Hdt. ix. 74, of the anchor borne by Sophanes of Deceleia, which Æschylus had probably seen shaken in the face of the Mede at Marathon and Plataea.

<sup>2</sup> The curious connexion between bearings and surnames, and the evident derivation of the latter from the former in many cases, is more than familiar to all students of history. Such names as Buller and Corbet speak for themselves; and the writer of this book cannot help indulging in the inconsiderable vanity of referring to three Tyrwhitts, peewits or lapwings (*Vanellus cristatus*), borne by his family since a remote Saxon period, and first assumed by a Northman or Dane, on his recovery, after being found wounded in a marsh by means of the hovering flight of those birds.

and most visitors to the Holy Land must have heard of Abd-el-Aziz, who at present rules beyond Jordan<sup>1</sup>, and who is called 'El Nimr,' the Leopard.

The connexion of heraldry with the history of Art is far closer than may be generally supposed. The representations of animals, &c, which it involved, were of course conventional in the highest degree; as the typical representation of a lion, once established, was virtually a hieroglyphic all over the heraldic world, and unalterable; and a dragon, once agreed upon, was, as Dr. Reginald Corbet sings, 'an example to all dragons.' But the effects of colour, as used in dresses and armour, can hardly be overrated: and the early MSS. everywhere prove, how subtle and vivid an instinct for colour sprang up from the eleventh to the fifteenth century. The custom of quartering knights' shields, and carrying light into dark and dark into light has been noticed by Mr. Ruskin for its effect on architectural ornament in colour, as well as a principle of MS. decoration. And great power and play of tints, combined with the highest beauty of personal dress and decoration, must have resulted from the use of mail rather than plate armour, since the mail-shirt would always fall in folds round the warrior's person, and either surcoat or mantle worn over it would be infinitely more graceful and brilliant than when it hung stiffly over the harsh angles of a suit of plate armour.

The connexion between heraldic conventionalism, and that of MS. ornament has led us to the above remarks on heraldry, as a science involving much study of colour, and so connected with the progress of mediæval

<sup>1</sup> He has been last heard of, we think, as Mr. Tristram's guide.

Art. The link between our own subject and ornamented writing is far closer, as there is a connexion between that and our modern landscape Art<sup>1</sup>. We cannot trace this now; but before the end of this chapter is closed some remarks must be made on modern symbolism, as it is used, or should be used, in church decoration. They ought, we think, to be introduced here, though they are more germane to the matter of Fresco. Until the English public are satisfied about the safety of pictorial representations in churches, it will be impossible to introduce them. It is not easy to understand, at first thought, why pictures should excite alarm in our churches, now that their windows are, by universal consent, and to everybody's satisfaction, filled with historical and symbolic representations in stained glass. Yet the real distinction which the popular mind draws, rightly, as we think, though unconsciously, may be arrived at by looking into this seeming inconsistency. In the first place, the painted window is generally purely historical, and represents scenes and events rather than single persons. It has nothing of the character of a statue or single figure in a painting, which may seem, and does sometimes seem, as if it were set up to be adored for its beauty. A figure of the Blessed Virgin at the foot of the Cross, or in contemplation of the Crown of Thorns, as in Delaroche's incomparable work, the greatest picture of its size in the art of our age, can mislead no one. Her figure, however noble and grandly painted, is only a part of a great history which the picture represents or

<sup>1</sup> 'Modern Painters,' vol. iii. p. 208 sqq.

implies and refers to. But the single figures of the Madonna, seen in countless Roman Catholic churches, whether noble or ignoble in point of Art, are set there for the convenience of the worshippers, that men, in whatever sense and with whatever view, may kneel down before them, and pray to them or through them. From the 'blue vision' of the sad Madonna at Murano and Torcello, to the wooden-gilt image of a modern church, the principle is the same. Nothing in Art can be more pathetic or beautiful than the one, and we are not aware of any object of contemplation which is much more painful than the other. But both are set there [for signs: because it is held to be easier for the heart of man to pray to what the eyes can see, than to Him whom eye has not seen. Idolatry is in fact the earliest and grossest form of seeking for a sign, or setting up an image (*signum*) to assist devotion. It is always held that poor and untaught people require special assistance to make them capable of prayer to any invisible Person: and it is asserted, again, that the 'simple' minds of *lazzaroni* find it easier to pray to the Blessed Virgin because she was once a woman, as if Her Son had not been made man: and wooden images are set up accordingly for these simple ones. All we have to do with them here is to notice that the use of single images representative of Saints, as single objects of worship, is perfectly distinct from that of symbolic images, like that of the Good Shepherd, the Vine, or the Pelican. No one worships the Vine, or the Olive, the Peacock, the Fish, the Rock of Sinai, or the Ship of Souls. Nor has there ever been any inclination shewn among men



to worship any effigy of Adam, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Isaiah, or any other typical person or prophet. The fact is, that proper use of symbolism has always been one distinction between the right way of decorating churches and the wrong. The wrong way, or abuse of decorative Art, employed without any apparent sense of wrong in the Roman Catholic Church, has always been to set up single figures made as beautiful as possible, in order that a kind of *half-erotic devotion may be felt before them*. The image or sign is set up to assist devotion, and gradually becomes the object of devotion; or it is so in some sense from the first. The right form of church picture or historical fresco is to narrate in colour and form, as if it were in words, some great event or work of God for man, directly wrought or indirectly. As has been noticed before, the representation of an event can hardly allow the mind of the spectator to address itself in prayer to the Saint or Apostle who is represented as doing something, and not merely standing to receive adoration. It is not because the works of Tintoret and Michael Angelo are really irreligious, or the work of men without religion, that they are so entirely unlike devotional pictures, so called: it is because they are always either historical representations of actual events, or vivid and powerful imaginations of them; and because the action of every figure in them is full and marked, so that their Saints are rapt and vigorously employed, and not at leisure, as it were, to receive worship. They are on a journey, or talking, or pursuing: they are painted as servants of God doing His will, not as



viceroys over men on earth. Were it fully understood as a rule that historical fresco representing the actual events of the Old and New Testaments is an absolutely different thing from representative images or personifications, and that symbols of Christ and of His Apostles are not the same thing as idols, the use of fresco would spring up again where it sprang up of old, in all buildings dedicated to religious purposes. Until it is revived in churches we can hardly look for it in other public buildings; and it is our conviction that no great step towards great Art will be made in the present English Schools till it is restored. There is no doubt either of the meaning or the truth of Michael Angelo's saying, that oil-colour is work for women and fresco for men; and a better reason still for its study is the publicity of fresco, and the fact that great works always kept before men's eyes make a special and continual appeal to their minds, while easel pictures in a gallery are only to be seen rarely, if at all.

We have said, that the origin of modern representative Art is in the ancient Lombard churches, and what is more to the purpose, Mr. Ruskin has said it before, and fully proved the statement. The notes to the first volume of 'The Stones of Venice' contain a beautiful account of Lombard Romanesque work at Verona, and Byzantine work at St. Mark's in Venice, distinguishing between the beauty and conventional grace of the latter, which is rigidly decorative and ornamental, and the energy and vigour of the former, where all is action of man and horse in hunting and fighting. The figures which compose the subject called the Chase of

Theodric are familiar to all travellers, being described in Murray's Hand-book: but the crypt of San Zenone, on whose front they occur, should also be visited. All the treatment tends towards representing violent action, and a great deal of humour is combined with it. We may still indulge the hope that the modern flower-work which is now in use everywhere, may be encouraged to develope itself into grotesque figure-carving. It is quite time for our artist-workmen to get beyond leaves and acorns and ferns, and to put some thought into their capitals and crockets. To this end they should, we think, be left to themselves a little, and have full opportunities of working out selected subjects in their own way. We have seen very great quickness and facility displayed, in stone-carvings done for ourselves, at ten shillings a day, and are quite sure that men like their author would be able to catch and realize almost any suggested idea, and also be able to invent for themselves. The elementary system of our Art Schools is at once simple and complete enough to teach any man to draw fairly correct designs for clothed figures in relief, if he has already learnt to do leaves and flowers, by careful attention to natural form: and the labours of artisan-sculptors may yet become a valuable means of Art-teaching to many who consider themselves superior to them in education;—only because they have had, and neglected, superior means of instruction. The early and unskilled spirit of the griffin-porches of Verona culminates in the gates of Ghiberti; and if modern work in bas-relief can teach the modern public to appreciate either end of the scale sincerely, the

labour of those who produce it will not be wasted : —nor need they regret it if their names are hardly preserved, or if they depart in the end leaving their deeds behind them, like the workmen of the impersonal schools of unknown masters, from the age of the Catacombs to the lifetime of Giunta and Nicolas of Pisa, of Cimabue and Giotto.

## III.

GIOTTO. (1276—1336.)

THE two preceding chapters contain nearly all we have to say about the impersonal schools of modern Art, as they may be called. All the works we have now to refer to as important for a student to dwell on and understand, where he has the opportunity of seeing them or good records of them, will bear the mark of some well-known hand and be associated with familiar names. It is out of the question, as we have said, to attempt to abridge Vasari in a work like this, or even to give lists of the painters of the various schools. Mr. Wornum's 'Epochs of Painting,' or the works of Messrs Crowe and Cavalcaselle, to which latter we are much indebted, are open to all who wish to study the history of painting generally. Our own wish is rather to trace from their first origin, or rather from their earliest revival, those principles of Art which seem to us the fittest to guide the student at the present time. The earliest Christian works are of the date of the gradual disappearance of Roman Art, as has been said, inherited through Greece from Egypt. We have also said something of the first known works of Teutonic Christians, of their force and energy, their humour, and the early and eager faculties of observation and imitation which their unknown pro-

ducers displayed; and have inferred that, whatever instruction they may have received from Byzantine artists, they soon worked out their lessons in a thoroughly original way.

The name of Cimabue marks the advance of Painting from merely traditional treatment: either he or Giunta of Pisa is named as the first who brought to bear the energies of the Gothic mind on their own branch of Art, and made a strong effort to advance in power of realization and expression. His great pupil, who is known by his Christian name of Giotto, his surname being Bondone, seems to have done more even from the first, and to have always observed and worked from Nature, from the days when Cimabue found him drawing the ram on the Apennine pastures. It will be seen that the effort at advance in representative power, and the constant habit of reference to Nature, go far towards making the principles of a school of Realist Art;—by which, in a general way, is meant, not a school which is opposed to ideal or imaginative subjects or treatment, but one which copies natural things faithfully, and makes out or realizes them thoroughly, and does not reject familiar or every-day subject. Dante, who was Giotto's contemporary and friend, gives us in the following lines the judgment of the chief of Gothic poetry upon the leaders of the Gothic sister-arts:—

‘Credette Cimabue nella pintura  
Tener lo campo: Ed hora ha Giotto il grido  
Si; che la fama di colui è oscura<sup>1</sup>.’

<sup>1</sup> Purgatorio, xiv. 4, quoted by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. ii.



Round, and after, him who won this emphatic praise from Dante, his Art was rising and to rise, until Francia's Angels had something of Paradise in them, and the painter's vision on the walls of the Sistine challenged the written descriptions of the Inferno.

Giotto's portrait of Dante dates 1300-6, we think; not later, since Dante was at Padua with him, in 1305, during the progress of his work at the Arena Chapel; but his earlier works are to be followed at Assisi alone. It is matter of some doubt whether the frescoes of the Upper Church of S. Francis are Cimabue's and Gaddo Gaddi's, or Cimabue's alone, or Giotto's in part as assistant scholar. Those of the Upper Church shew his full power of thought and invention, and both daring in attempt and a power of execution far beyond anything he can have learned from Cimabue. The progress in all that we are used to consider as artistic power from the celebrated Borgo Allegri<sup>1</sup> picture of Cimabue, to Giotto's Marriage of S. Francis to 'his Lady Poverty' is incalculable. The former picture is doubtless a great advance on Margaritone, or the unknown Greek artists who may or may not have instructed the first Italian master. Vasari's view that Cimabue was taught by them is controverted by Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle: but at all events the Virgin of the Borgo Allegri proves that he must have followed the Byzantine picture-types of traditional features. The most charming book of travels in existence, 'Curzon's

<sup>1</sup> The story of the visit of Charles of Anjou to Cimabue's studio, and the first sight of the new Virgin and Child, and procession of the picture to the place in Santa Maria Novella, which it occupies to this day, is too well known to require notice. It is probably true.

Monasteries of the Levant,' gives the plain reason why he did so, and also why such traditional representation remains unchanged to this day. It is matter of church discipline and teaching. 'The traditional likenesses of the Saviour and some of the Apostles have been handed down to us from the earliest ages . . . From the remotest times the figures of the Saints were drawn after a recognized form, from which no variation was made till a late period in the Latin Church, and which continues to be observed in its original exactness in the Greek Church to the present day . . . That no changes might creep in in the lapse of time, the manner in which not only all the Saints and personages, but the scenes of Holy Writ, are to be drawn, is exactly described in a MS. constantly consulted by the Greek artists. This curious book, with various additions which have been made from time to time, serves as a manual for painters employed to this day to ornament churches, &c, with frescoes: a translation of it has been published in French by M. Didron, called "*Manuel d'Iconographie Chrétienne*." 8vo. Paris, 1845.' Cimabue would have followed the Greek types and copies to a great extent, then, whether he received personal instruction from Greek artists or not: and no one who remembers the features of the Greek Madonnas of Torcello and Murano at Venice can help observing that the face is exactly the same as that of the Madonna of the Borgo Allegri. It is distinguished by its long eyes, short upper lip, and the distance from the corner of the eye to the angles of the nose and mouth: still more by the sadness of expression, which the rude Greek work never fails to convey. Francia, and we think

Cima di Conegliano, both give the Madonna the same features, shewing the same advance in power on Cimabue which he himself shews on the mosaics. As has been hinted above, his great step in advance was in power of eye and hand and realization, in greater sense of beauty, and greater energy and daring in experimental treatment. The Borgo Allegri picture, for instance, is stippled and worked up to a high degree of brilliancy: and it would seem from the early paintings at Assisi as if Giotto received his Art like an improved instrument from his master's hand, little aware what use his own vast and unconscious powers would make of it.

For it is not only improvement in every form of technical skill which we observe in Giotto's work from the first: it is the presence of a mind as fertile, inventive, and decisive of view as those of the unknown Lombard workers in stone. A creative power like theirs was now to be employed in the more powerful materials of painting. The Florentine lucco covered a graver man than did the Lombard mail-shirt; but in humour, vigour of conception, and clearness of inner vision of their work, the Veronese and the Tuscan schools of workmen greatly resembled each other. We do not know how far the term 'school' applies, in strictness, to the Lombard workmen; but it certainly does to Giotto and his contemporaries, since he received much instruction from Cimabue, and transferred it in turn to all the Giotteschi, or followers of his own. And before pointing out Giotto's technical discoveries and growth in scientific power, there is an important observation to make, or rather quote, as to the spirit and

frame of mind in which he worked; which seems greatly to resemble, *mutatis mutandis*, that of some of our best Realist painters of religious and other subject at our own day.

In the first place, his habits of thought seem to have been simply Christian, rather than ascetic or ecclesiastical<sup>1</sup>. From the beginning of his work at Assisi, and probably before it, he was always in contact with religious persons, in the stricter sense of the word. Either secular or regular clergy, or monks and nuns, were his patrons and friends, perhaps his assistants in his work, from beginning to end. He was early made preacher in fresco to the Franciscan order, and preached their view of life and the glories of poverty for them, honourably, and to the best of his ability. Nor does it seem as if his powers were limited by any sense of falsehood or unreality in the principles to which he was giving enduring life; it seems clear that neither mendicant monks nor secular clergy disgraced the Faith in his eyes. Having undoubtedly had to deal and drive bargains with monks, and finding them not very unlike other men in such matters, Giotto has not a word of malice or mockery, or even reproach for them, that we know of. He must have thrown his whole soul into painting the praise of Lady Poverty, and her espousals with S. Francis; and he never expresses or implies a thought that Franciscans were not poor in this world, or otherwise than sincerely self-denying. Yet he has no more idea of being one of them, or taking their view

<sup>1</sup> Note A, p. 104.



of life and course in it, than had Michael Angelo or Benvenuto Cellini. His 'canzone' on Poverty<sup>1</sup> are a not unedifying contrast to the fresco of her glories. He seems in fact to have enjoyed life as frankly and thoroughly as a man can, who has higher aims than enjoyment; and probably his continued industry and prosperity gave him at least the full human share of happiness. But the near friend of Dante must have been a man of many thoughts and inward struggles; and Giotto's immense reputation for saying good things was probably no very decisive indication of a normal state of high spirits. He shews, like Dante, the natural protestantism or independence of a powerful mind; yet his clerical and monastic friends seem never to have mistrusted him; nor to have cared, if he took their inner measure as often, and as profoundly well, as he drew their portraits on the wall. It might be the subject of a very charming essay, we think, if any one would compare the works and the spirit of the Franciscan painter of the Court of Poverty, and the great Dominican Brother Angelico. The rivalry of the two orders is well known, as well as their different courses of action; and there seems a curious unfitness of things in the fact of the great Realist being on the one side, and the chief of all Purists on the other. The fact is, that, as all Giotto's works on Scriptural subject abundantly shew, he held the Christian Faith with a sincerity and depth which made him as much a brother of monks as of all other men. His labour was as much

<sup>1</sup> K. F. L. F. Von Rumohr, vol. ii. p. 51, Crowe and Cavalcaselle. Giotto enumerates all the evils of poverty, involuntary and voluntary, dwelling on its moral dangers in particular.



labour of love as theirs, and its results shew full appreciation of their motives, though he expresses shrewd doubts about the wisdom of their practice. There is the spirit of devout and intense earnestness of representation, striving to realize facts intensely believed, the Gothic sense of incongruity and odd incident, which gives its humour to Gothic character<sup>1</sup>, and also that sense of honour which makes the true workman strive for every technical excellence. What he attained in the latter way seems to come next, though our observations must be necessarily brief, and are not entirely, or for the most part, original.

Composition, or artistic arrangement of groups and separate figures, seems to have been determined and fully systematized in Giotto's mind. He was not a man, nor was his time a suitable period, for analysis of principles or framing of strict rules. The age of grammar was two centuries off at least. But a fairly good treatise on composition, and grammar of such of its rules as are capable of system and expression, might be framed from his works. Regular principles seem to have been carried out in the allegories of the Lower Church at Assisi, with the greatest possible skill, reaching in fact to the Art which hides its artfulness. Groups are admirably distributed over the space, and connected and bound to each other with

<sup>1</sup> The two children in the fresco of S. Francis's Rejection by his Father, who have pebbles ready to pelt the saint, and whose countenances indicate strong anticipatory enjoyment of the proceeding, are clearly a reminiscence of Florentine stone-throwing, a civic habit much pursued by almost all classes. See 'Romola,' and especially Mr. Leighton's illustration of the children in the 'Conversion of Monna Brigida.' See also in the 'Lady Poverty.'

the greatest subtlety, forming curves and sweeping lines of real beauty all through each picture. It is probable that the painter's continual employment in covering spaces of regular and graceful shape had much to do with his marked habit of balancing mass against mass. The double arrangement in the *Marriage of S. Francis with Poverty*, and the triple one in the *Allegory of Chastity*, are beautiful illustrations of balanced grouping<sup>1</sup>. Every figure, moreover, visibly and at once contributes to the general motive or purpose of the picture, so that none can be spared. The unity of action and conception in one of these large compositions is marvellous, and when their great number is considered the power of their author appears quite unearthly.

Again, all which we call Harmony, or pleasantness of colour-drawing and treatment, takes a new step and development in the work of Giotto's manhood. Sharp, clear, and unsentimental Florentine faces take the place of Greek ideals, and are treated not traditionally, but with all the interest of portraiture. Sometimes, however, hard outlines are softened, and cheeks rounded; limbs are drawn in springing action, and generally in correct form. Round, full, and pillar-like throats, upright and rather portly, and long almond-shaped eyes, prevail everywhere. Where the anatomy of a limb

<sup>1</sup> The former is a double group, round which the eye is easily carried in two beautiful curves, by an outer and inner circuit. The joined hands of the principal figures are continued by the heads of the angels who stand below down to that of the youth who is giving his cloak to the beggar. Those of the two pelting children bring the eye round to the worldly young men and the avaricious group; and other heads form an inner circle.

is wrong, or if it is missed and ignored, still the limb is in right action, as in Hogarth's work; though, in his case, the dress of the eighteenth century really excused him from much attention to the subject of anatomy, as we apprehend that no human being in a wig and short breeches can ever look 'in drawing' at all in a picture. On the right of the great door at Assisi, S. Francis stands pointing to a crowned skeleton, and preaching the same sermon which Orcagna afterwards delivered with such solemn power on the walls of the Campo Santo at Pisa. The painting of the bones, &c, is correct enough to prove that Giotto had at least a competent knowledge of the ground-plan of God's image<sup>1</sup>. Again, action is never overacted in his works. They are in fact conceptions rather than compositions, in strict statement. Whether he exerts himself on portraits, or events, or outward nature (some slight account of his landscape will follow shortly)—or even if he draws on his imagination, first calls up a scene before his own mind's eye, then 'bids' its figures stand still<sup>2</sup> until their likeness is fixed in his fresco for ever—he always strives for the truth, for the real event which has been, or for the future thing which shall be real. This, as we have said in other words, makes him the first high example of all Realist painting—that he was really faithful to the truth he saw with his eyes, or the vision he 'saw

<sup>1</sup> Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. i. I much regret to have missed this in a late visit to Assisi.

<sup>2</sup> Browning, 'Pippa Passes,' vol. i. p. 191, ed. 1849:—

'Bid each conception stand, while, trait by trait,  
My hand transfers its lineaments to stone?'

within his head.' He knew enough anatomy to do justice to action; he either did not know enough of it to look upon it as a motive or purpose of painting, or he cared far more for the facts of Nature, and the true imaginations of the Faith, which he felt to be his real work. He calls no attention to muscles and sinews; nudity gives him no special pleasure; he strives to do it justice, but does not insist upon it. There is grand composition of groups and single figures; but there is no attitudinizing. One passionate motion, that of throwing up the hands, seems to have struck him as a special expression of the wildest and deepest distress. And rightly, for those who have unhappily seen that action know, that, resembling as it does the movement of a drowning person, it is the sign of a sinking and despairing spirit, of loss of earthly hope, and of all hope for the time, and of the wild appeal of one at his wit's end, who sees no help in his extreme need. Those who know the works of William Blake will remember the marvellous figure of Job, with arms raised high, in his first and awful complaint, 'Let the day perish wherein I was born<sup>1</sup>.' But, generally speaking, Giotto is able to give intense feeling and passion to forms or countenances, without bodily gesticulation, only in the natural movements of the scene. His faces are wonderful examples of power of expression, for they no more grimace than his figures attitudinize: they express feeling exactly as keen-featured men and clear-looking women do, when they are thoroughly affected, too much so to disguise expression, or think

<sup>1</sup> Gilchrist's *Life* contains a copy of this plate, vol. i.



of their own deportment. When his men or women shed tears, they cry in a homely and piteous way, helplessly human, which simply goes to the heart of a tolerably sensitive beholder<sup>1</sup>, and which shews that the bold jester who drew them had the softness of a thoroughly humorous character. When they express interest, they do so in a vivid Florentine way. Every one who has looked at Giotto, or his great successor Ghirlandajo, will see the truth of the remark in 'Romola' about the 'sharp Florentine faces' which fill the crowded frescoes of the latter, as well as the former.

The popular idea of old Italian features is formed too much on the portrait of Rafael, and too little to that of Dante<sup>2</sup>: or else one's fancy is apt to stray to dark cheeks and ragged beards of modern Piazza di Spagna models. Or we take up with the ideal of the portraits of Cæsar Borgia, forgetting that he was a Spaniard, of a cast of face visible, we believe, in Andalusia to this day. It is a good work to direct any one who is reading modern history to study the Florentine of Dante's day in Giotto, and of Savonarola's in Ghirlandajo. The value of the publications of the Arundel Society, which enable the untravelled to form a conception of these men's powers, and the life of their day, can only be shewn by time and patient attention to them. And the Society's larger plates from their works do this to intelligent students of history, for they give an idea of the subjects who

<sup>1</sup> See the Entombment, in the Scrovegno Chapel at Padua.

<sup>2</sup> Note B, p. 104.



were worked from. All the counsel, decision, and fighting power of the old Florentine is in them. Close-shaven as they almost always are, the youngest of Giotto's subjects look delicate enough, but their looks are scarcely girlish like Rafael's. The youthful Dante, for instance, engraved in vol. i. of Crowe and Cavalcaselle, soft as he looks, has a jaw like a boa constrictor; which the rounded face and full lips no-way disguise. Mr. Leighton has rendered valuable service to Art and literature, in common with the authoress of 'Romola,' by his well-considered illustrations of old Florence in that work; and it will be noticed in it that Tito's Greek contours look more like the popular Italian ideal than those of the true-bred inhabitants of 'our fine old quarrelsome Florence.' The latter are not like broad-bearded Germans who lived by the saddle; nor have they the fair recklessness of ancient English features, like Edward IV's, or Gloucester's—they are far more thoughtful and active-minded. But they are all hardened and worn, with the looks of men who lived where every house was fortified, and cut on the outside into solid rustication, all gloomy strength. They did not live in a city at peace within itself, among the fair Venetian mosaics, of drinking birds, and signs of the Lord's presence, where the hand upraised was cut in relief over the doorways, blessing all who entered<sup>1</sup>. In short, the works of the first great Realist contain composition without academical posing, and

<sup>1</sup> Represented in 'The Seven Lamps of Architecture,' I believe. I cannot find it in 'The Stones of Venice.' The hand in act of blessing, as a symbol of Divine presence, is at Plate xi. vol. ii. p. 138 of that work—on a Byzantine Cross.

unconscious expression instead of consciously-adjusted features.

There is an old book (we have no doubt it had some reputation in its time,) which we remember seeing in a shop-window somewhere in the Strand. It was devoted to recipes (accompanied by illustrations) for the expression of the varied passions of the children of men by drawing. When we saw it, it was open at Despair. As far as we remember our peripatetic studies through the glass, the author told his pupils, *ex cathedrâ*, that in Despair the corners of the mouth are violently drawn down, the lines of the cheeks deeply traced, the eyes sunken and strongly wrinkled, the teeth exposed, and the hair disordered. The illustration carried these instructions out to the letter. At first it awakened a vague idea of impossible absurdity:—but a discursive imagination, and rather extended experience, at last enabled us to trace some resemblance to it in continental countenances, observed at critical moments of sea-sickness. If the ingenious artist chose that means of studying Despair from the life, bad sailors will probably consider that he was not far wrong. We daresay the other passions were done like condign justice to, or rather upon.

Giotto did not work by recipe. But his faces of pain and sorrow are distressing in good earnest; he puts tears and laughter in men's eyes, and joy is joy in his hand. His treatment of Despair is stern, rude, and formidable in its earnestness, shewing the spirit of Orcagna and Dante. He has no idea of methodical convulsions of feature. Despair, in his view, is a thing of the soul, shewn by desperate deed. He personifies

her as the last of the vices, the end of the reprobate — defying and renouncing God — self-strangled and dragged into everlasting punishment.

Some short account of the Scrovegno Chapel at Padua seems necessary here, as it is easy of access to the traveller, and as the Arundel Society has published satisfactory records of its frescoes. We refer our readers to these, and especially to Mr. Ruskin's account of them, which should be carefully studied. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle also give an admirable description of the whole building. The building now called the Arena Chapel at Padua appears to have been finished by Scrovegno, probably from Giotto's designs or with his advice, in the year 1303. It is uncertain whether Giotto had yet been at Padua. But in that year he is said to have been invited by Benedict XI to execute paintings for him at Avignon. The well-known story of his being asked by Benedict's messengers for a specimen of his powers, and only drawing a circle with brush and colour, is said to be connected with this invitation Northward. The actual migration of the Popedom to Avignon took place two years after, under Clement V; but this seems by no means fatal to the story<sup>1</sup>. Benedict, however,

<sup>1</sup> It seems not impossible that Benedict XI may have been preparing for the migration which Clement accomplished. His messenger was sent to Giotto from Treviso. Vasari refers the whole story to Benedict IX, dead 60 years before; who, as he says, invited Giotto to Rome. Schorn (see note in Mrs. Jonathan Foster's translation of Vasari) shews that Baldinucci has proved that Boniface VIII was his patron on that occasion, circ. 1295. This falls in with Mr. Crowe's account, which we adopt. He says: 'The fact of Benedict XI's invitation to Avignon is

died before Giotto reached Avignon, and it is suggested by Mr. Crowe that the painter betook himself to Padua in consequence. We know that Dante and Giotto were together in Padua in 1305-6; and the Arena paintings must have been proceeding then, and were, perhaps, near their completion. The chapel is a single vaulted aisle with six windows, its choir separated by an arch from the rest of the building. There is a waggon roof with a blue and starred vault. At the East end is a fresco of the Lord in Glory, flanked by the Annunciation and the Betrayal. At the West end is the Last Judgment, Paradise on the Lord's right hand and Hell on His left. The highest or third range of pictures represents the Virtues and Vices—the former have their faces set towards the Paradise on the Western wall, and headed by Hope, who seems about to enter in; and on the other side Despair, the last of the Vices, is being dragged towards the everlasting fire. Six pictures on each side next below these allegorical figures represent scenes from the Protevan-gelion of the life of the Blessed Virgin. The same number below illustrate the Gospel histories down to the Day of Pentecost. Every student of Italian history, or of painting, ought to read Mr. Ruskin's account of the latter, and look carefully at the record of the frescoes published by the Arundel Society. The present Government of Italy will probably diminish the melancholy importance which at one time seemed

thus authoritatively stated by Albertini (*Opusculum*, p. 51): "*Fuitque (Giotto) a Benedicto XI, Pont. Max. in Avenionem, ad pingendum martyrorum historias, accitus ingenti pretio.*" There is no ground for thinking that Giotto ever left Italy for France at all.'



likely to attach to these copies, by preserving the originals<sup>1</sup>. But a very short time of patient attention to the former will enable their reader to form such an idea of the character and the work of Giotto, as will be of real avail to him in his studies, even if he is only attending to the subject of Painting as a part of that of History. We may hereafter try to point out how advisable it is to do this, and to illustrate the written records of events by the remaining works of the men who saw and lived through them. Now that every effort is made to enable students to realize facts and to call the imaginative power to their aid, it is obvious that the help of Painting must be called in, as that of Poetry has long been used. It seems unreasonable that Dante's *Divine Comedy* should be the central work, so to speak, of the Middle Ages, and that the actual MSS. of many colours and thoughts, drawn by the hand of Dante's close friend, should pass unstudied and almost unknown. From these pictures from the New Testament history one may arrive at an accurate understanding of Giotto's intermediate position between the Byzantine and Naturalist schools. 'As compared with the Byzantine he is a realist, whose power consists in the introduction of living character and various incidents, modifying the formerly received Byzantine symbols,' and also striving for correctness and definition in representing ordinary natural objects. 'So far as he has to do this, he is a realist of the purest kind; endeavouring always to conceive events

<sup>1</sup> We remember, in 1854, seeing the traces of three broad streams of rain from the W. upper window to the floor, which divided the Last Judgment by their three channels of destruction.



precisely as they were likely to have happened, not to idealize them into forms artfully impressive to the spectator. But in so far as he was compelled to retain, or did not wish to reject, the figurative character of the Byzantine symbols, he stands opposed to succeeding realists, in the quantity of meaning which probably lies hidden in any composition, as well as in the simplicity with which he will probably treat it in order to enforce, or guide to, this meaning: the figures being often letters of a hieroglyphic, which he will not multiply lest he should lose in force of suggestion what he gained in dramatic interest.' Thus in the Marriage in Cana, as a realist he takes note of what nearly all artists passed over after him, that is to say, of the poverty of the entertainers. This is far more than probable, as the want of wine on such an occasion points plainly to narrowed circumstances. The miracle is straightforwardly represented as a deed of Divine kindness and blessing. But Giotto implies by the lifted hand of the Madonna, and the action of the fingers of the bridegroom, as if they held sacramental bread, that there lay a deeper meaning under it; while the master of the feast, who is drinking deep, not aware of the wonder just wrought, seems to represent the carelessness of the world to present spiritual power.

The Entombment, the Ascension and the Crucifixion, of the Arena Chapel seem to us to demand special attention: the Saviour's face in the last is expressionless and mystic, the countenance of one who was God as well as Man. The allegories of Virtues and Vices are wonderful in their power of symbolism and expression of thought without words. One or two examples must

suffice; and for the rest we must refer to Mr. Ruskin and the work of Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle.

Infidelity is a woman, or man, in a flowing Eastern robe, wearing a helmet with a broad rim, which keeps the light from her eyes. She stands infirmly as if falling, carries in her hand an image which holds a cord or noose round her neck, and has flames bursting forth at her feet. A figure above seems to call to her in vain.

Envy has fingers ending in claws, and raises her right hand with a vague clutching movement: a serpent issues from her mouth and is about to bite her between the eyes: she has long ears, horns on her head, and flames about her body.

Fortitude is a robust figure standing behind a broad shield which covers her from the shoulders to the feet. Broken darts are deeply driven into it, and it bears a lion's head. She wears a lion's skin knotted round her neck, and holds what seems to be a mace or heavy four-edged sword in her hand. Hope and Despair have been mentioned. All alike shew the seriousness of mediaeval allegory, that is to say, the quantity of premeditated meaning it conveyed, and its use in men's eyes as an instrument of teaching truth and duty.

The use of symbolism or allegory for the sake of impressiveness is illustrated by all the ancient stories in which riddles are involved, and the Eastern custom of putting forth an enigma as a trial of ingenuity. It seems to have travelled westward from India to Thebes: perhaps the conduct of the Sphinx made the actual riddle unpopular to the Greek mind; but the oracles

must have kept the political acumen of Greek statesmen actively employed on allegorical statements. In Art, or for didactic purposes, the use of allegory is to be attributed to the agreeable excitement of the intellect and awakening of the attention and the imaginative power which it produces. But, like the oracles, Giotto always uses allegory for a purpose—with obvious and forcible intent to press a point on the mind. Our modern use of allegory makes it a mere proverb of contempt, simply for want of meaning. No wonder we reject it, when the popular idea of it is in ceilings covered with ancient and aquiline Romans, short swords, scales, and lyres; or with gods and goddesses apparently engaged, as Carlyle says, ‘in the infinite conjugation of the verb to sprawl.’

Giotto’s labours in Naples are beyond our reach at present; nor have we space for any account of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, the great museum of his works, or for the earlier paintings (1300–1302) of the Chapel of the Bargello, or Podestà’s Palace. The great Inferno and Paradise there are still intelligible, though the colour of all the work is lost. All has been drawn and ‘modelled’ in red, and ‘glazed over,’ the shades being softened into light by stippling. The Lucifer follows Dante’s description; but the chief interest is in the Paradise, as it contains portraits of Dante in his youth, of Corso Donati, and Brunetto Latini, and other determined Bianchi or Neri, at peace for a short interval<sup>1</sup>.

The landscape of Giotto is rudimentary: life was too

<sup>1</sup> Note B, p. 104.

short for him to paint in, and, like all great men of the Middle Ages, he felt that his game was man. Yet he introduces craggy or blue mountain distances with enjoyment; remembering probably the old Apennine life of Bondone, the shepherd's son, before Cimabue found him drawing by the wayside, and led him away to Florence, to Dante, and to honour only second to his. Mr. Ruskin mentions a beautiful piece of rock incident behind the 'Sacrifice for the Friends' at Pisa, which we regret not to have seen<sup>1</sup>. 'There is a little fountain breaking out at the mountain foot, and trickling away, its course marked by bunches of reeds: the latter formal enough certainly, and always in triplets; but still with a sense of nature pervading the whole.' Giotto's trees are generally conventionally drawn, the forms of the leaves being given with marked accuracy, which enables one at once to determine what species he means. He enjoys clear open sky and winding streams, as Benozzo Gozzoli, Ghirlandajo, and Perugino afterwards did, until Masaccio stood on the verge of the schools of unconventional mountain design.

Giotto's last days were crowded with great works. In 1334 he was made Master of Works and Chief Architect of Florence, and his Campanile at the Duomo of Santa Maria dei Fiori began to rise. But in 1336 its architect passed away, fuller of honours than of years, having made and opened the way for such an advance in all man's means of recording thought by colour and form, as no man ever caused before or since. He owed much to the Byzantines through Cimabue; far more

<sup>1</sup> It is now quite lost (1867).



to the Pisan sculpture generally<sup>1</sup>. But he left behind him a greater increase of technical power and of zeal for Art, and faith in it, than can be traced to the labours of any other man. He is the founder of modern Painting, and its history is a tale of glory for centuries after his day; and in all that glory he has a share. All is decay after Michael Angelo and Tintoret, his superiors perhaps in human greatness. And for a time after Giotto's death there was a pause; no man was left who matched him or approached him, until by degrees his followers drew on to where he had pitched their standard far in front, and once more the goldsmith Ghirlandajo took it up and pressed on, to be the master of Michael Angelo. Those who think all Art comes from the Renaissance or Revival of classical models and literature, will do well to consider the accumulated power and knowledge of the native Italian schools, and how well the labours of their first masters prepared their followers to understand and work from models of Greek beauty.

<sup>1</sup> Nicolo Pisano finished the great pulpit of the Baptistery at Pisa in 1260.

## NOTE A, TO PAGE 87.

I HAVE verified most of the descriptions throughout this book, during a visit to Florence, Pisa and Assisi in the summer of 1867: and must again acknowledge the excellence of Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle's descriptions and illustrations. Giotto's powers are perhaps seen at their greatest stretch in the symbolic paintings of the Lower Church of Assisi; in which the colour also is wonderfully preserved and of exquisite quality. The Giottesque warm white, yellow, blue, and delicate flesh-colour with raw Sienna shades are relieved against very dark skies, with extraordinary effect. I could not find S. Francis and the Crowned Skeleton, in the Upper Church, where the frescoes have suffered severely. But the sacristan still calls one's attention to the inflexibly obstinate face of S. Francis's father, in the celebrated 'Rejection,' as 'duro come pietra.' The stern and aggrieved parent of Santa Clara is also immortalized. A Madonna and S. John in the Lower Church, by Pietro Cavallini, seem to attain an extreme of pure beauty rarely approached in any age.

## NOTE B, TO PAGES 93 AND 101.

## 'ITALIAN FEATURES.'

I REMEMBER observing to Mr. Holman Hunt, in his studio at Florence, that Ghirlandajo's models in the Santa Maria Novella (the Tornabuoni and others) were very English-looking people. 'Of course,' he replied, 'the high Gothic countenance is the same everywhere. There are two marked types of face and form in North Italy: that and the old Etruscan. Dante may be taken for chief example of the Gothic; Napoleon's is the best-known specimen of the other. One is a large-boned frame with high features; the other a shorter and broader figure, powerful and statuesque, with dark regular face and eyes, and generally with peculiar beauty in the neck and throat.'

The Bargello portrait of Dante in his youth, mentioned at p. 92, has just been repainted (July, 1867). Rather unfortunately, no attempt has been made to reproduce the youthful and rounded original: a modern middle-aged ideal Dante has been substituted.

The new 'Isabel' by Mr. Hunt is a very grand ideal of the Etruscan female form, which combines grace and softness with a wonderful expression of strength.

## IV.

## ORCAGNA AND ANGELICO.

ORCAGNA . . . . DEAD BEFORE 1376 : ANGELICO, 1387—1455.

IT is a circumstance well worth notice, though not very difficult of explanation, that the painters of the earlier periods of Italian Art seem to have suffered less than men of other crafts from the distresses of the times they lived in. No doubt they had a share of suffering, as thoughtful spectators, or indeed as citizens compelled to take a side. Giotto's Paradise in the Palace of the Bargello, with its portraits of Florentine notables, supposed at length to have ceased to trouble each other with the war-cries of Bianchi and Neri, expresses a melancholy thankfulness and subdued humour, which is characteristic both of him and of Florence about A.D. 1300. As has been said, Dante is there in youth; he was in exile with the Bianchi in 1303. We know not how far his features had changed into their fixed look of enduring anger in the days when Giotto and he were together in Verona during the completion of the Arena Chapel in 1306. Their friendship ended only with Dante's death in 1321, and one cannot help comparing the position and career of the exiled poet and the prosperous painter. Perhaps the foremost cause of exemption from political

troubles enjoyed by the latter was the humility of his position. As all know, a painter of early days, *quâ* painter, was not a gentleman in a studio, but a craftsman in a *bottega* (a shop), though of course if he were noble, like Cimabue, he ranked with his family, and took their fortunes. Yet Cimabue lived in the stormy times of Guelfs and Ghibellines, and must have seen all the domestic tragedies of the Florentine civic feuds of Buondelmonti and Uberti, without himself suffering exile or loss. The connexions between all the leading painters and the religious houses, and the constant employment of the former on dedicated work, and within walls exempted from plunder and destruction, must have done much to keep them from public affairs and their troubles. Cimabue and Giotto, like their successors, were citizens of the world, employed by popes, cardinals, kings, and nobles, from Verona to Naples; and the latter was to have visited Avignon. But still to the time of Ghirlandajo and afterwards, the painter as such continues to be a simple trading workman of the upper sort, in the same position as a goldsmith or fine metal-worker. In very many instances this latter ‘mystery’ was the first which gave employment to the young artist. Orcagna, Verrochio, Ghiberti, Ghirlandajo, and Dürer, are all examples of men who learnt that exactness and precision, which, if not power, are indispensable to right use of power, from dealing early with a precious material, and continual effort to make the work equal in value to that material. We follow or coincide with the views of both Mr. Crowe and Mr. Ruskin, in choosing three names beside that of Ghirlandajo as those of



typical men, whose different characters and lines of Art, as well as their great success in it, give them chief claim on the attention of the student. He who enjoys the advantages of Italian travel must never pass without attention a work of Masaccio, of Fra Angelico, of Orcagna, or Ghirlandajo; and copies, engravings, and photographs will do something for stayers at home, especially after careful use of the works of the authors above mentioned. They form between them a body of pictorial history, biography, criticism, and natural history which excuses our frequent reference to them.

As Vasari says, 'Giotto threw open the gates of painting,' which Cimabue however had done much to unlock, for him and for others. The former stands at the point of divergence between the purist and naturalist schools of painting, or rather his character stood between the purist and naturalist character of painters. When the works of Fra Angelico and Orcagna are compared with those of Masaccio and Ghirlandajo, the divergence is complete. Angelico's inspiration of the purely religious temper, Orcagna's of the severely religious temper with a tendency to gloom; that of Ghirlandajo, the naturalist painter of men, and that of Masaccio, the naturalist formed to grapple with all nature,—are sharply enough contrasted. It is not that the first two were simply religious painters, and the last two irreligious. The mind of Domenico Ghirlandajo seems to have been simple, pious, and charitable as a monk's: but Angelico withdrew from the world, and the others lived in it. Both Masaccio's and Ghirlandajo's Art is willingly dedicated to sacred subject, and they

faithfully exert themselves in it. But they are painters and fishers of men: their eyes see no monk's visions;—they have before them the action and the life of God's visible world and its chief creature. Their hope and faith in the world to come is true and undoubting: but while they are here they are called to paint what is here, and to reflect the past in their imaginations for the instruction of their brethren here. The illustration of Holy Scripture is the common ground of all these men and their chief work, as they felt it to be in common with the rest of their age. The difference of their treatment is that of their natures and characters; and as their works remain close to each other in Florence and Pisa to this day, the traveller has excellent opportunities of comparing them. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle's illustrations, though not perfect, are still of the greatest value in this respect to the student of Art-history: and now that the facilities of travel are so much greater than ever before, and tourists are proportionally more numerous, we may hope that a gradually increasing number of them will be inclined to pay more attention to the works of past inspiration which are still bright on the walls of Assisi, and Padua, and Pisa. The Campo Santo at the latter city has special claim to our attention, as some of the best-known works of Orcagna, or at least, works which till of late have been undoubtingly attributed to him, are there in the immediate neighbourhood of those of Benozzo Gozzoli, the pupil of Angelico. There must have been something like occasional approach to happiness in the painter's half-conventual life in those days. Angelico's labour of rapturous devotion

is an example quite literal, and historically certain, of the highest phases of religious ecstasy. Perhaps it was attained only by maintaining a certain ignorance of the thoughts and ways and troubles of the world, and escaping from its responsibilities by submission to a constant rule of passive obedience. The same temperament is exactly described in Sir James Stephen's *Life of Mabillon*: there are the same anecdotes of solemnly appointed prayers before the beginning of every work, and during its progress, and at its end; of ennobling labours on bent knees, and tears of devout delight and tenderness: and it is difficult to conceive of more beautiful historical pictures of rare character than the lives of both these men afford us. Both are types of the happiest growth of all the monastic virtues; and contemporary Art-history and anecdote shew the rarity of such growth. Not only was an unaffected and special veneration felt for them by their brethren, their partial imitators, and the outer world, which distinguishes them from others; but their brethren in Art, as well as their brethren in the cloister, seem to have taken an entirely different and much more practical view of painting as a matter of business. As a Dominican brother beloved and venerated, Angelico was free of the artistic and conventual world alike. His labour was his reward: he was separated from the world. We cannot say what he lost by it, in necessary narrowness of mind, and inability to conceive of the toils, the strength, the action, and the suffering of his fellows<sup>1</sup>; but we

<sup>1</sup> He must have known much of their sufferings, since his love for the poor was proverbial. Nor do we see what good he could have done

know what Florence and the world have gained by his loss, his isolation and his labours, to this day. Few can walk through the old convent of San Marco and see the frescoes which yet shine in its corridors—with a tender brilliancy in them, like their author's fame in the sight of God and man—and not own the beauty and the worth of contemplative life. It does not take a very lively imagination to call up the image of Savonarola, pacing to and fro in meditation on the sermons which bore witness in vain against Alexander VI and the power of evil; we cannot help fancying how often his musing eye must have passed over the well-remembered representation of the Lord's entrance into Hades and the fiend crushed beneath his fallen prison-doors. But while the brother of Fiesole worked on his knees within his cell, scenes of a strictly business-like and worldly character were going on without. Apostles and Madonnas were being chaffered for at so much the braccia. However, during his lifetime it is unlikely that his Prior would think it necessary to employ other painters; so that Angelico's skill saved himself and his brethren from the necessity of driving hard bargains. But the anecdotes about the brothers Ghirlandajo and their rebellion against the monks of Passignano; of the strict watch kept over Perugino and his ultramarine; and of Paolo Uccello and the cheese<sup>1</sup>,—shew us a much humbler phase of artistic and conventual life, and enable us to understand

by taking his share in the 'rugging and riving' of Bianchi and Neri, and being exiled with Dante, torn to pieces with Corso Donati, or hanged and burnt with Savonarola.

<sup>1</sup> See Vasari—sub nominibus.



the rather impartial and humorous views of Giotto and the severer anger of Orcagna, who in his *Infernos*, like Dante or Moses, spareth none, monk or cavalier, and knoweth not to have mercy. It is impossible here to discuss the question raised in the history of early Christian Art, as to Orcagna's authorship of the *Triumph of Death* and the *Last Judgment* of the *Campo Santo* at Pisa. The *Inferno* is so nearly destroyed by time, sea-winds, and particularly by Solazzino's restoration, that no one would be inclined to dispute about it. But the name of Orcagna as a painter is as thoroughly identified with the *Triumph of Death*, as his architectural reputation is bound up with the *Loggia*; and in historical sketches like these we may still be allowed to refer it to his name, under protest. The painter or chief designer of those works, whoever he may have been, is a person to be compared with Giotto and Angelico, whether he be resolved into Andrew and Bernardo, the two Arcagnoli of Florence (transformed into Orcagna's), or—if we like to take Messrs. Crowe's hypothesis, and say that it is all Siennese work—into the two Lorenzetti. By any other name the fresco would look as terrible; and though the Strozzi paintings on the same subjects, which are undoubtedly Orcagna's, are said to differ in important features of treatment from those of the *Campo Santo*, we must leave the question of their authorship open<sup>1</sup>. There is no question that their painter came to his work full of the spirit of Giotto; or that he lived

<sup>1</sup> Our own last view of this fresco inclines us to think that its points of resemblance to the *Campo Santo* works in faces and forms prevail over all differences.

in the full current of Italian and Florentine life. But he is also impressed with old tones of thought, and full of that severity of judgment, which came down from Eastern asceticism on the minds of Byzantine mosaicists, and through them into Italy with Belisarius' conquests and the rule of the Eastern Empire, or by way of Torcello and Venice. All the work has the dreadful earnestness of the Judgment of Torcello, and is also carried out in detail with laborious power of realization unknown to Eastern minds or hands. There are the hermits, secured in strong places and holes of ragged rocks from the temptations of the fatal world below, milking the hind, and at peace with all the wild and timid beasts of the field. There is the grim S. Macarius, once hermit of the Thebaid, who dwelt in the marshes of Scete, to enjoy the society of their powerful mosquitoes; whose convent and rule of discipline remain there to this day (see Curzon), and whose followers fast the whole year, excepting Sundays and the Great Fifty days, speaking to no man without leave. He leads the Dance of Death in Northern Art, or directs men's thoughts to it, as S. Francis at Assisi points to the crowned skeleton who in this world has his victory. But there is here none of that grotesque Gothic humour which jests with death in sheer combative defiance, or of that general hope of mercy, firm if childlike and illogical, which is here and there suggested in the Swiss or German treatment of the subject; as where Death bids the old noble come with him 'like a good sword'<sup>1</sup> worn out. Dwelling

<sup>1</sup> 'Du edle Degen.' The German mediaeval lays perpetually call a Knight a Degen or sword; hence this play on the word in the Dance

continually on the universal change of Death, and hopelessness of escape, the Teutonic workmen seem rather to bid men be of good cheer and depart in hope. It is not so with him of the Campo Santo. All is dreadful severity. The Lord is as clearly speaking the words of doom as in Michael Angelo's painting in the Sistine Chapel. The Madonna sits by Him in helpless distress: Raphael the Archangel hides his face from the sight before him: other angels weep and wring their hands, or strive horribly with the brute-shaped fiends who are tearing away the children of men from the indignant Presence. There is no safety or hope except in flight from the world. And the world is below, and its ways. Macarius bids the three kings or nobles look on death and corruption, with a hard unloving expression which has nothing in it except *Cras Tibi*; and which is as sharply contrasted with Raphael's face, as the wrath of Dante with the tenderness of Angelico. Ugucione della Faggiuola of Arezzo is there, the kinsman of Corso Donati and hated enemy of Florence, who had used his brief rule over Pisa and Lucca to inflict on her the severe defeat of Montecatini<sup>1</sup>.

Next to them Death is turning her back on the poor and aged and afflicted who invoke her, and flying furiously on broad black wings upon the young and rich amidst their careless feasting under orange-

of Death. On this subject see Dr. Woltmann's '*Holbein and his Times*,' an admirable new work. Leipsic, 1867.

<sup>1</sup> Two thousand men perished there, says Machiavelli, book ii. ch. v. He speaks of Ugucione as having 'by means of the Ghibelline party made himself master of Pisa and Lucca.' He reduced Lucca as general or lord of Pisa.

boughs. With them is another foe of Florence, Castruccio Castracani, who succeeded to the power of Ugucione, and had nearly ruined her in the calamitous battle of Allepascio. When this picture was painted Ugucione was in exile with Can Grande, and Castruccio had been hewn down indeed, in a good hour for Orcagna's native city. The broad scythe of Death is raised against him, as he sits among fair luxurious forms, hawk on fist; and just beyond them lies the harvest of the earth, a heap of corpses with wonderful realization of death on their rigid faces. Angels or devils are drawing their souls from their mouths, as new-born children, the fiends having the greater part, and fearful distinctness being given to the sudden horror of the soul recreated unto destruction as it finds itself in the claws of the enemy. The flight of Death is all speed and propelling power; and the side-swing of her body in its course to give the scythe its full reach, shews how true and definite was the painter's inner vision of the forms he drew. The angelic faces are of great expression and beauty; but what is more remarkable is the life of the strange creations which represent the enemies of mankind. They are all types of brutish natures, yet unlike any given brutes: they grin and chatter and snarl, and shew bristly muzzles and beaks and white teeth, and have that peculiarly disgusting effect about them which is always involved in the idea of a hoofed or clawed creature which walks erect and asserts itself humanly. Their expression, so to call it, seems to be composed in the painter's mind partly from the rodent and partly from the canine face. Most of those who have seen the



fresco, or a good photograph from it, will remember the beastly expostulation and complaint of the creature who is tugging in vain at the heels of the fat and tonsured soul whom the angel will have, in spite of him: he has the intensely biting expression of an enraged otter or badger—I cannot think of any better comparison. And it seems as if no one but Orcagna, or some equal of his, I do not care for the name, could give in such an archaic composition the helpless pence and the hideous scream of the poor soul hanging by the heels in the clutches of that other, on the left, near the pit's mouth. Angelico painted on his knees. I do not see how Orcagna could have painted flat on his face; but certainly, if position has anything to do with subject, he might well have done so. And in fact, the most wonderful thing of all about the mediaeval *Infernos*, written or painted, by Dante or Orcagna, or earlier Byzantines,—is the question how living men and brethren could have deliberately painted them at all. It is quite a different matter from the questions which may arise to the minds of Christianly-taught men of the present day who have to look at Gustave Doré. His horrors are those of an infidel trader in horror. So much pay from the moral and enlightened English public of the nineteenth century, and he will give them a due quantity of blood, brains, intestines, fire, writhing, howling, and outer darkness, manufactured in a steady business-like way, with an inspiration (or rather a possession) which seems perennial—*σκῶρ αἰώνων*. But there is something very hard to understand in the methodical and unsparing way in which men of great and thoughtful spirit could consign political enemies

to damnation : and not political foes alone. One need not dwell very much, perhaps, on Vasari's statement that it was Orcagna's invariable habit to put his personal enemies into the hot corners of his *Infernos*. 'Among the condemned,' says the biographer, speaking of the lost Santa Croce fresco, which repeated the subjects of the Campo Santo of Pisa, 'Orcagna has placed Guardi, serjeant of the commune of Florence, whom the devil drags along by a hook ; he is distinguished by the three red lilies in his white cap, then the accustomed head-dress of serjeants, beadles, and others of that class. This Andrea did because Guardi had seized his goods for debt. The judge and notary who had acted against him on the same occasion were similarly represented by the painter among the sinners of the *Inferno*.' This kind of savage jest, or earnest, seems to throw a rather disagreeable light on the Faith of the Middle Ages, and inclines one to think that men who handed over their neighbour to eternal fire, or played with the thought of so doing, could not have much conviction of its actual reality, or of the fearfulness of actual judgment of the souls of men. Perhaps it is true that the sharp Florentines were able to nurse, mature, and sustain an intensity of personal hatred which the rougher yet softer Transalpine spirit did not care to be burdened with. It is probably true that civic strife is the worst of all strife. The deadly enmities of Italy were split up and divided over and over again, without losing their intensity in the least, till Florentines sought each other's utter destruction, house against house, as city warred with city all over Italy, and state against

state;—all their divided quarrels, like divided worms, growing into perfect reptilehood again<sup>1</sup>. As Hallam, following Sismondi, remarks of the Italian Republics, they played over again the tragedies of the free states of ancient Greece; and the celebrated eighty-second chapter of Thucydides' third book applies as exactly to Italian life and character in the Middle Ages as to the Greeks of the Peloponnesian war: 'Many troubles and grievous fell upon the cities in their seditions, things such as happen, and will for ever be happening, while the nature of men is what it is<sup>2</sup>.' Even painters must have shared in the national and civic desperation of spirit which seems to have gone on exciting and exhausting the whole Italian mind till it was spent as with fever. Mr. Hallam does not often permit himself any expression of feeling about character; but he makes a remark with which it is difficult not to sympathize, when he says that he cannot forgive Dante for placing Farinata Uberti, who had saved his native city from the furious revenge of his party, in one of the worst circles of his *Inferno*. Orcagna may have had better reason for painting Death about to strike Castruccio Castracani, since he,

<sup>1</sup> Orcagna died before 1376-7. Two years after that date, broke out a series of desperate popular struggles—first between the Albizzi, heading the Parte Guelfa, and the Ricci and others of the Ammoniti, or families disfranchised by them; then of the middle classes against the Minor Arts of Florence and the Ciompi, or populace. The names of Salvestro de' Medici, Filippo Strozzi the elder, Benedetto degli Alberti, and, not least, of Michael Lando, are those of the chief actors of the time. All must have been ripe for savage contest about the end of Orcagna's days. Angelico, Masaccio, and Ghirlandajo were born clear of the evil time.

<sup>2</sup> Ἐπέπεσε πολλὰ καὶ χαλεπὰ κατὰ στάσιν ταῖς πόλεσι, γιγνόμενα μὲν καὶ ἀεὶ ἐσόμενα, ἕως ἂν ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις ἀνθρώπων ᾖ.

perhaps, had but lately died to the salvation of Florence. And Dante, again, may plead, in sad excuse, that with the impartial severity of the Byzantine, he condemns his own friends too, and spares Francesca di Rimini no more than Cleopatra, though he falls as one dead on seeing *her* in bale, whom he had known as child and maiden. However this may be, where blood and wounds were seen continually, and torture was a judicial institution, no doubt men would feel less horror and disgust in representing such things, and might do it innocently: which is, to say the least, extremely difficult now.

Orcagna's work (or that of the Lorenzetti) in the Campo Santo is specially important, as that of a true successor of Giotto, who combined vast and intense imagination with technical power and zeal for realization. All the old questions between grand-style and finish, Idealism and Realism, are anticipated and answered by it, in point of fact. If Idealism be great imagination of great things, it is here; if Realism be the careful carrying out of subject into detail, and of great subject into specially devoted detail, like perfect music set to noble words, it is here. Everything is carried out faithfully to the utmost of the painter's power, even to the thorny teasles and thistles in the foreground. The 'intolerably severe' tone of his mind, perhaps, indicates a certain inferiority to Giotto, who, like most humorous persons, seems always great by reserved force, and whose evident consciousness of two sides to a question is quite nineteenth-century English. How infinite is the difference between both these men and Angelico! If it be true



that time, circumstance, and his century make the man, and that we are all ground out from the wheels of fate like screws out of a lathe, how is it that the same age had these men in it, doing the same thing with all their hearts and minds in such a different way? However this may be, Angelico represents the milder and more loveable part of the monastic or contemplative life. The resemblance between his character and that of Mabillon has already been glanced at; and they may rightly be put together as men who combined great intellectual power with all the best of the peculiarly ascetic qualities. There is no occasion to enlarge on the virtues of the cloister—only the history of these men and their contemporaries, secular and monastic, proves sufficiently that those virtues are as rare in their perfection as the virtues of the purely secular life. But Angelico was indeed one of those chosen ascetics, beyond the praise of man, who can give the world up without despising it, resign social life without hostility to society, and hate sin, still loving the sinner. Vasari was doubtless an offender against many rules, including that of historical truth; but he seems to have had a genuine enough feeling of admiration and respect for the brother of Fiesole; and his sensible platitudes about Angelico's withdrawal from the world seem to indicate that Florentines, in and about 1550–1568, were not less conscious of the difficulty of making the best of both worlds three hundred years ago than our own good people now, nor less acute or sound in their judgment as to ways and means of so doing. I rather think Vasari has been called the Boswell of many Johnsons: and he has all Boswell's many good qualities without his

tendency to display and strong liquors. Above all, he has that one of the biographer's great qualifications which Boswell shewed in such grotesque perfection; he generally thinks his subjects superior to himself, and always forgets himself and his self-consciousness in doing them full justice. Hear him on Angelico: 'He might have lived in the world very comfortably, and might have gained whatever he desired over and above what he first possessed: but he seems to have chosen for his content and quiet's sake, being by nature gentle and kind, and especially for the salvation of his soul, to profess religion in the order of the Preaching Friars' (the Dominicans of San Marco at Florence and San Domenico at Fiesole)—'for although it is certain that one may serve God in all conditions of life, nevertheless it appears to some that they can better be saved in monasteries than in the world. And in proportion as this course succeeds well with good men, so great, on the contrary, is the danger of being truly most miserable and unhappy, to those who become religious persons with any other motive.'

This is exactly parallel to Giotto's verses on Poverty, after long acquaintance with the Franciscans at Assisi—in which he arrives at the conclusion that Poverty is a thoroughly bad thing, after all, for the world in general. Had he known Angelico, he would probably have understood and sympathized with him even better than Vasari did. There are fifty-one years between the birth of the one and the death of the other; and Angelico, says Vasari, began Art-work very early, by missal painting and miniature. A few service-books adorned by his hands still remain in San Marco. His first frescoes in

Santa Maria Novella perished when the church was altered, and others have been grievously restored. In fact, it seems that a large class of men in all ages and countries care for painting about equally—that is to say, not at all—and are affected also with a kind of dull spite against what they cannot understand. The taste for whitewash indiscriminately applied over fresco and carving has been just as great in Italy as in England, and the destruction it has wrought has been proportionately greater. The Marchese Selvatico<sup>1</sup> makes reasonable and bitter complaints about the frescoes of Andrea Mantegna (or Giotto, as he says) in the Chapter-house of the Friars Minors at Padua. They were whitewashed over many years since, but partly freed with great pains and labour; when, ‘who could have imagined it?’ says the Marchese, ‘the friars are mad for the “candido;” they took the whitening-brush and covered them over again.’ Orcagna’s frescoes in Santa Maria Novella had to be, not restored, but altogether replaced by Ghirlandajo, who did honour to them, however, with all the straightforward dignity of his character, by avowedly repeating their designs wherever he could.

Angelico’s works mark the greatest height of excellence in Devotional-Purist-Art which has ever been reached: there never has been any such Religious painter before or since, in the more restricted sense of the word Religious. Christian Art, as has been said before, is the Art of Christian men doing their best with high and lofty purpose as teachers or poets;

<sup>1</sup> See note to Mrs. Foster’s translation of Vasari.

Religious or devotional work is that of devout men preaching or praying in form and colour: and such was Angelico's, all through his life of prayer. In these days, when all men are so convinced that work is worship that they neglect prayer altogether, he is in far greater danger of being underrated than over-valued: living altogether in the world as we do, we care for no monk's visions, not even though he be the greatest monk who ever laboured. Yet the same men who think of Angelico as a mere devout rhapsodist, cannot see the spiritual power of Michael Angelo: and we may, perhaps, add in passing, that no man who cannot reverence and delight in the greatest monk of Italy, will see the best of her greatest man—whichever of the three be greatest, Dante, Michael Angelo, or Tintoret. For narrowness, the Brother's works have all the breadth of his great charity: and extraordinary purity and exaltation of aim fully make up for what he may have wanted in mental calibre or stature, so called. 'He lives in perpetual peace. No seclusion from the world, no shutting out of the world, is needful for him: there is nothing to shut out. Envy, lust, contention, discourtesy, are to him as though they were not; and the cloister walk of Fiesole no penitential solitude, barred from the stir and joy of life, but a possessed land of tender blessing, guarded from the entrance of all but the holiest sorrow<sup>1</sup>.' In so far as it is possible for any man of our own times to make an unaffected choice of him as a model and master,

<sup>1</sup> Modern Painters, vol. v.



his work is the most characteristic of all the Purist school; and could disciples of his be employed to ornament modern churches with painted histories of the Faith, a means of teaching and exhortation would be employed which is now far too much neglected and suspected. Nor do we see why superior science and greater skill in form and natural phenomena, or even greater experience of mankind, or higher innate powers of mind, should prevent a student who holds the Christian Creed in earnest from learning very much from him. The great thing for any student of his works to remember is, that when, or if ever, he betakes himself to the highest of all tasks—that is to say, whenever he tries to paint what Angelico painted—he has no right to neglect what Angelico pardonably neglected. Knowledge of and attention to Nature and the outward and inanimate beauty of God's creation, were not to be expected of a conventual painter in those days. It was for Masaccio to point out the path to such sources of beauty, though his early death prevented his leading men far along it; so that Ghirlandajo's backgrounds are often as simply conventional and inattentive as Giotto's. Rock and mountain drawing in particular made little advance from Giotto to Ghirlandajo: although all the Religious painters, North and South of the Alps<sup>1</sup>, seem to have delighted in craggy and peaked forms, and often in distant snow, as background for their saints and Madonnas. This is of course connected with the mediaeval view of mountains and wildernesses as places

<sup>1</sup> Compare especially the great Van-Eyck in the Louvre, and Durer *passim*.

of penance and meditation: but for whatever reason, Angelico and his brethren only painted them conventionally, with simple pleasure, in bright pure green and blue and purple. When a devout man, never taught to look at Nature as a visible manifestation of God's work, is painting Saints and Angels from the inner vision, they are in the foreground of his mind to some purpose; and as he gives his greatest powers to imagine and realize them, so he gives not much thought, but conventional care and a different kind of affection, to composing a fit background for them with delicately tufted trees, not very like real trees<sup>1</sup>; with glittering villages and spires, and delicately shaped peaks and ridges in distance. In short, it must be admitted that the true Purists were wanting in much knowledge of the landscape forms, which seem to be the only things in Art for which we out-of-door ultramontanes at present care. But our narrowness in thinking of Angelico as a mere monk, and quarrelling with Durer for want of aërial perspective, is a worse fault than Angelico's only thinking about angels, or Ghirlandajo's only thinking about men. It is still reserved for modern artists to combine Turner's knowledge of natural beauty, or some inheritance of it greater or smaller, with devout or lofty figure subject: and great things have already been done in our own schools. For instance, the four square inches of landscape in Holman Hunt's *Finding in the Temple* are a concentration of almost every natural feature one can observe on

<sup>1</sup> See *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. plate xi. p. 320 (from Raphael).

the western side of the Mount of Olives at this day; and the picture would not gain in its impressiveness by having, instead of them, a Peruginesque river serpentine away into blue distance, with forests and spires upon its banks. So of the Scapegoat and the Light of the World: so of Millais' streaks of daffodil sky and autumnal distances: so with Mr. Herbert's Desert of Sinai; with Carl Werner's landscape Purism; with Mr. Armitage's and Mr. Leighton's higher-aimed works, and with some of Mr. Spencer Stanhope's:—the elaborate realism of the landscape and entourage does not diminish in the least from the feeling of the figures and their action: whether the motive of the work be devotional or ideal, or didactic, or all three. Mr. Ruskin's illustration (in 'Modern Painters,' vol. iii. p. 321) puts this question very fairly and conclusively. He gives on one page a woodcut of a precipice with tufted trees on its crest, from one of Ghirlandajo's backgrounds, that of the Baptism of Christ. It is copied from a bad engraving, and the picture probably shows more rock-knowledge than the print which represents it. But nothing can be more quaint, absurd, and generally stiff and disagreeable than the whole thing. Opposite it is an etching, after Turner, of a parallel subject—a fragment of one of his cliffs in the drawing of Bolton Abbey, wonderful in its accuracy and the soft severity of its lines. 'It does not seem to me,' the author remarks, 'that, supposing them properly introduced in the composition, the substitution of the soft, natural lines for the hard, unnatural ones would make Ghirlandajo's background one whit less sacred.'

This will have to be taken into consideration by every one who looks at the works of Angelico with a wish to obtain lessons from them. The fact is, thoughts are to be obtained from them, but few lessons in form. His use of colour is extremely beautiful, especially in the brightness of hue in his shades; but his feelings led him always to try to dispense with shade and substitute pure and clear colour for it: and it would be an intolerable affectation for any student, or indeed for any modern painter, to think of following him. The student ought to lose no opportunity of examining his works, because they are at the very summit of devotional Art, and their feeling and purpose shew how real a thing it is. But it is impossible to ignore all that has been learnt since his time—I mean not only in the way of technical processes, and grammar of form, colour and perspective, but in that of natural facts and phenomena. And supposing, which we hope is possible, that our young painter were as devout and pure a man as Angelico—and could hope for a life of work from which worldly care, distress, and temptation should be almost excluded, by one painless act of voluntary sacrifice—even then, in order to begin serious discipleship, he would have to possess the power of Hunt, Millais, or Rosetti, and to go through the intense labour which enabled them to lead the English Pre-Raphaelite school through its tentative stages. That school was in its origin a discipline of purism and reform: from conventional colour to natural; in choice of noble subject instead of trivial; and in thoughtful and completed finish instead of inane



blotting and sham work. Now that the training of its masters is complete, they have, in some of their work, done almost perfectly what Angelico did to the utmost perfection attainable by the technical knowledge of his times. In pure beauty or clear thought they have not excelled him, perhaps not equalled him; but in difficulties overcome in pursuit of pure beauty they have done more than he. As was to be expected, none of the leading Pre-Raphaelites of twenty years ago have given themselves to Purist painting, or strained always at religious subject. Of the three we have mentioned, two, we suppose, are Realists, and the third high in the list of Ideal or purely imaginative and fanciful workers: and in fact, if any one were to make an affected choice of Angelico's subjects and manner, he would, unless he possessed the very highest powers and the greatest devotional beauty of character, combine profanity with absurdity in a strikingly unpleasant way.

Yet, like other Religious painters, Angelico shews a power of pure brightness of colour, obtained by curiously varied means, which is beyond praise. He uses glories of beaten gold, which change and reflect different lights as the spectator moves, and which therefore throw the purest flesh-colour into dark relief: he enamels his angels' wings with wonderful effect of light—his draperies are pale blue, rose, delicate green: his flesh brightly flushed as if penetrated with light. Unless we are prepared to choose his subjects, his hues must not be our model; but much may be learnt from them. One lesson as to finish is important—that his draperies and ornaments are of a generic and

abstract character, and that supernatural subject imposes a limit to realization. Angels in brocaded robes, with traceable patterns, would never do: and where they actually occur in some of Mantegna's and Fillippino Lippi's works, the effect is distressing. It is obvious, of course, that what becomes an earthly King to wear is worth realizing in his portrait, as Titian realizes his Doges' embroidery: but such detail in supernatural subject is out of the question.

The same remark as that made in Note B to the chapter on Giotto, applies to Angelico's models and ideal types of feature. They are nearly all of the Lombardo-Gothic type, and the Southern or Etruscan face and form are scarcely represented in his work.

There is a beautiful comparison in Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. i., between the Sistine frescoes and Fra Angelico's painting in Nicolas V's Chapel in the Vatican, to which the reader will do well to refer.

## V.

## MASACCIO.

EVERY historical sketch of the progress of Art, however slight it may be, necessarily brings the modern student into contact with enquiries or speculation about the laws of such progress, if there be any. Now, in a practical point of view, enquiry about the laws of artistic progress is enquiry about the law by which men of genius are produced upon the earth; since almost every advance in the different branches of Art may be traced to the virtually unaccountable passion, or genius, or inspiration, or possession, of some well-known person. Men have been found who were capable of delight in the most arid by-ways of Art. Perspective, 'that delightful thing,' as he called it, consoled Paolo Uccello in his declining days of life and fame: and after the study of it had passed through his hands and Masaccio's, the whole science of drawing was changed; although the diffusion of their knowledge was of course a matter of long time. Form and anatomical knowledge were afterwards carried forward by Rafael and Michael Angelo, like a standard before the host of painters, to a point which no man's strength has since attained. Yet Rafael and Michael Angelo avowedly and faithfully studied from Masaccio's works in the Brancacci Chapel<sup>1</sup>, as

<sup>1</sup> In the Carmine Church at Florence.

their masters had studied before them. Vasari mentions Perugino and Ghirlandajo, with Leonardo and Fra Bartolomeo, and others of the greatest names in Italian Art, all learners from Masaccio; and Lanzi considers that the wonderful figure of the 'Shivering Youth' in the fresco of S. Peter Baptizing, is in itself 'an epoch in the history of Art.' It is indeed so, as it displays the right degree of Realism in its right place, subdued to, and labouring for, the perfection of lofty subject. Masaccio did not want to call particular attention to the incident; he seemed to see it himself, and he wrote it down vividly for others. A vulgar workman would have tried to make the spectator's teeth chatter: here there is no effort—the youth's eyes are fixed on S. Peter, and he is not thinking of the cold, but of his baptism. But he *is* cold, and it is the unconscious crossing of his arms and quiver of his splendid muscles which has made the picture instructive and admirable in the eyes of all painters ever since. But as a part of the composition, he is not meant to be the principal figure; his broad arms lead the eye to the head of his brother in Christ receiving baptism next before him; and to S. Peter's hand administering, and to the apostle's face and look of invitation towards him. There is no possible law or 'natural' sequence of causes and effects which can account for the sudden appearance in Art of a young man capable of painting figures like this. M. Taine's comparison of Italy through the Middle Ages to an artistic vineyard, and of all her greatest painters to vines at exactly the right height, soil, and exposure, is a pleasing analogy as far as it goes, and of considerable value; but it is



valuable because it illustrates the difficulties of Art for Northern races, and shews them the labour which is before them : not because it accounts for Masaccio and Michael Angelo as if they were vegetables. It leaves unnoticed the fact that the latter drew much of his sap and juices from the former ; as also that Michael Angelo's pupils or suckers could never assimilate *his* genius, or get anything from him except technical science which they had not power to use. Nor does it explain why, on the favoured slope and within the favoured period, men of such different flavour as Angelico and Masaccio, Rafael and Michael Angelo, all grew and flourished within reach of each other's influence.

We do not care to go into the question of the power of circumstances over man, and the spirit that is given to man. Italy, and the teaching of Leonardo, could not 'make' Bandinelli great : and London and no teaching at all 'made' Blake and Turner at least peers of painting, to be named with Buonarrotti. At all events, creative genius ought not simply to be treated by science as an intrusive element which defies analysis ; or to be exorcised with the common forms of 'artistic temperament,' 'picturesque national tendencies,' and the like. Nor, indeed, can it be satisfactorily accounted for on materialistic grounds, seeing that such means of explanation are at present quite unequal to its phenomena ; and moreover that they give those who hold by them no right to point to any future time, when analysis shall be able to enumerate the constituent elements of the soul—of Masaccio, for instance. His contemporaries complained rather grievously and

vituperatively, that the elements of order, arrangement, series, and method, were omitted entirely from the composition of Tommaso, 'son of the notary Ser Giovanni di Simone Guidi, of the family of Scheggia, holding property about the Castello<sup>1</sup> San Giovanni in Val d'Arno.' The nickname Masaccio is decidedly uncomplimentary, the very contrary to such titles as Giorgione or the more respectful Angelico. Masaccio is said to mean Big, Stupid, or Heavy Thomas. Mr. Browning construes it Hulking<sup>2</sup>. Let us call Masaccio Tardy, or rather Thundering Thomas. Very likely he earned the name. Nothing worse than a consistent determination to paint incessantly, and to do nothing else whatever, is alleged against him. Vasari says he was good and kind-hearted, but utterly negligent and regardless of himself, though willing to do anything for others. Still in sharp Florence we can imagine that a person 'whose answers were horribly vague,' and who assumed all the rights of an absent man in an irresistible manner, may have been rather irritating to his friends, and intolerably so to his enemies. Michael Angelo's supreme forgetfulness of all earthly considerations while the brush or chisel was in his hand was of the same character as Masaccio's; but his rank and the strong regard of Lorenzo di Medici secured him from the principal consequences of poetic abstraction. We have partly seen how Florence treated the works

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps only 'hill-farm.' Italian for 'chalet,' 'châtelet,' 'chateau-let,' &c.

'Norica si quis

*Castella* in tumulis.' (Virg. Georg. iii.)

<sup>2</sup> See the wonderfully thoughtful and instructive poem of 'Fra Lippo Lippi.'

of her greatest men, and that monks were as prone to whitewash as modern churchwardens. The best workman did not always find the best patron, even in mediaeval days: and the complaint of painters and painters' creditors seems to have been an ancient tale of wrong, like that of English authors and artists in the good old Grub-street times. As a rule, Masaccio and his family seem never to have paid or been paid. Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle give a dismal though extremely interesting account of the poor master's schedule, since even he, they remark, had to give account of his 'totum nil' to the Publicans employed by Giovanni di Bicci de Medici. He owes so many ducats: against this stand so many more which he cannot get from his debtors: his best mantle is pawned at the sign of the 'Cow' or the 'Lion,' and he has to pay about thirty per cent. interest on the money lent on it: he is tormented with all the meaner miseries, and paints away endlessly through all. Such a life was probably not so unhappy as it seems. It did not last very long, however, though Vasari's statement that Masaccio only lived twenty-six years is contradicted by dates in his own work. Mr. Crowe's chronology appears quite satisfactory as follows:—Masaccio is said by Vasari to have returned from Rome on Cosmo de Medici's return to power in 1434. This is impossible, as his death in 1429 is certain from the documents of the Catasto. See Crowe and Cavalcaselle, vol. ii. p. 547<sup>1</sup>. Now so early as 1420 Giovanni di Bicci de Medici did return to power at

<sup>1</sup> Note A, p. 142.

Florence; and it appears from documents discovered by M. Cavalcaselle, that in that year or thereabout Masaccio painted Bicci's picture there. The next year came the income-tax, and, as has been said, Masaccio had to give account of his debts, which were almost his whole property. Now one of his Roman pictures, which includes the portraits of Martin V and the Emperor Sigismund, is said by Vasari to have been highly praised by Michael Angelo, in a conversation in which Angelo remarked to Vasari that both Pope Martin and the Emperor lived in Masaccio's day. And Martin was made Pope in November, 1417, a year of plague at Florence; when Masaccio may have gone to Rome for a time, and may have returned in 1420. And he is now ascertained to have gone to Rome again—to die, no one knew how—in 1429, leaving the great fresco of the King's Son unfinished. His life is divided between his earlier works at Florence (one of which, a Madonna and Child, remains in the Accademia), his labours at Rome (of which the S. Catharine is best known, and drawn by the able hand of M. Scharf in the new edition of Kugler), and the paintings of the church of the Carmine and the Brancacci Chapel therein, executed after his return to Florence in 1434, that is to say, in 1420. The patronage of the Medici probably saved him from starvation; for the rest, he lived entirely in his labours, and when he died (no man seems at the time to have known or cared how) they buried him among them in the Carmine; and no memorial was placed over his grave, says Vasari, he having been but little esteemed while in life. Like Wren, he had done that pretty well for himself.



Thundering Thomas, probably, was not greatly valued by the ordinary population of Florence in his day ; who seem to have been, in all grades of life, neither worse nor better than respectable people without much heart or intellect are in our own time and country : content to let genius take care of itself, and as eager to white-wash a great man's frescoes all over, as if they were his sepulchre. But Brunelleschi's grave remark that Florence had sustained a great loss in Masaccio's death<sup>1</sup> was probably echoed by all living painters, and the ill-remembered name is rich in the praise of Michael Angelo, one of the few men who in their lifetime have not only consciously possessed immortal honour, but been able to bestow it. The long list of other masters who studied Masaccio's works, besides Angelico, who was fifteen years older, and can hardly have studied them as a disciple, includes Fra Filippo Lippi and his son Filippino, Verrochio, Castagna, Ghirlandajo, Landro, Leonardo, Perugino, Fra Bartolomeo, and Rafael, with Andrea del Sarto, and many others named by Vasari, who, like every one else, speaks of the Brancacci Chapel as a great school of painting. The fact is, that besides his power of conception, and the tenacity of mind and rapidity of hand which enabled him to realise his inner visions with unprecedented certainty, Masaccio was the first who really dwelt on the fact that man has two eyes, and sees binocularly half round an object ; literally not seeing it on a flat plane, but as in the stereoscope. Whether

<sup>1</sup> Masaccio probably gained much of the statuesque power of his works from Donatello and Ghiberti, who with Brunelleschi and himself were all at work at the same time in Florence.

he ever spoke of it or not, in his time, this is probably the best way of accounting for or describing the so-called projection or aërial perspective of his works, which distinguishes them from those of his predecessors. The distinction between aërial and linear perspective seems to us a difficult thing, on the whole, to understand or make out. Aërial perspective is really the effect of air made partly visible by means of watery or other vapour suspended in it. This is no doubt considerable at a considerable distance. But it cannot be appreciable, nor can it be rightly expressed, except by great subtlety of colour, in pictures where a number of persons and groups are assembled within a room, or in a court, or square. What amount of perceptible dimness can there be, by reason of visible air effect, between the two sides of the Grand Piazza at Florence, except in rain or fog<sup>1</sup>? The real projection of a near figure depends on drawing; that is to say, on linear perspective; on the correct modelling of its surface, on well-understood action, on labour and power of foreshortening, on well-digested and expressed knowledge of form. Obscurity without mist or distance is wrong. Flake

<sup>1</sup> This was written before I had seen the following remarks by Mr. Hamerton, 'A Painter's Camp,' p. 243 :—

'The fact is that the dimness of objects does not express their measurable distance, but only the humidity or impurity of the atmosphere; and therefore the common theory of aërial perspective is of no use as a test of artistic truth. The houses on the opposite side of any London street in a November fog are a good deal less visible than the detail of a precipice seen in clear weather across an Alpine valley leagues broad. In spite of this, people will have what they call aërial perspective, and painters, if they have to live by their art, must confine themselves to those conditions of the atmosphere when there is haze enough to produce it.'

white is not expensive, and mere mist, to 'put figures back,' may be scumbled in in any quantity without their being made the least like Masaccio. Masaccio seems, from Mr. Crowe's account, to have combined the use of transparent and body colour in his frescoes. He made a sculpturesque model or relief, first in grey or green, then glazed warm transparent reds, browns, and yellows over, and finally used thick bright colour to 'fetch up' his high lights, as in modern oil-painting. He did not stipple, but painted in a swift predetermined way, fully anticipating Mulready's dictum, 'Know what you have to do, and do it.' Masaccio is to be imitated by sheer drawing, and by that alone. Careful rounding in chalk or sepia, and the habit of putting down on paper one's natural binocular view of an object, will cost the student time, labour, and, what is more than all, *vigorous attention while he is working*. When he has gained it, he will not think of sending his background off into dimness: his figures will stand forth in truth; in the undeniable reality of true perspective, with that certainty and power which so delighted Paolo Uccello. This great man's name is still less remembered than Masaccio's in modern Art; yet Paolo seems, as Mr. Crowe reminds us, to have run a parallel course to his, and to have worked out and analyzed much of that unconscious science of drawing, which in Masaccio was pure invention, or rather discovery. The battle of Sant' Egidio in our National Gallery is a delightful specimen of Uccello's powers; and the dead or supine figure under the horse's feet, grotesque and odd as it looks, gives one an idea of Paolo Uccello labouring at his darling science, which awakens one's

personal regard for him, and also a slight sense of amusement at him.

We cannot now pursue the subject of perspective any farther. Some remarks, which we owe to Mr. Macdonald, of the Oxford Art School, will be in their place in the Second or Practical Part of this book.

There is one more remark—a strange and melancholy one—about Masaccio: that at his early death, at whatever age it took place, he seems to have stood on the verge of great discoveries in Landscape. He did indeed originate a style; that is to say, he just shewed the way to a class of subjects and a form of inspiration which, humanly speaking, would have changed the history of Art altogether, and produced unknown effect for good on human character. Had Ghirlandajo, still more had Michael Angelo, followed the line of thought pointed out in some of the mountain backgrounds in the Carmine, the work of Turner would have been done in Italy instead of in England, and grand landscape would have been inaugurated by stronger hands than Claude's, or even Nicolas Poussin's. Mr. Ruskin gives us a beautiful light-and-shade engraving from a drawing of his own after Masaccio, a background in one of the frescoes in the Carmine<sup>1</sup>. It is quite possible, he says, to attribute it to Filippino Lippi. But at all events, the hand of a great innovator is there, who gazed hard and lovingly at mountains as no other man had looked or would look for centuries. It is wonderful to think of the men who were labouring at Florence at one and the same

<sup>1</sup> See *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. p. 322.



time: certainly Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, Masaccio, and Donatello must actually have been all to be seen at their work at one time by any one who would go from the Duomo to the Carmine. It may be represented as an age of gold, no doubt; but it was also an age of hard life, dubious patronage, struggle with impostors and their interests (see *Life of Brunelleschi*, in *Vasari*), and pre-eminently of hard-dealing abbots and white-washing friars.

This background of the fresco of the 'Tribute Money,' however, is the only faithful record of mountain nature, before Titian studied in Cadore. It represents rounded Apennines, not unlike the lower hills seen from the Val d'Arno; towards Lucca, and 'the oaks whose acorns drop in dark Auser's rill<sup>1</sup>.' There are wild-looking small trees in the foreground, shattered with storm, and wonderfully unlike the delicate Purist leaves of Perugino and Rafael. The lower hills are covered with just the same brushwood of beech or alder, which clothes the lower Alps and Apennines; their tops are bare and solid sheets of marble, as at this day. They rise with the long slope, gradual and graceful, which no one but a practised mountain draughtsman will ever give, even in our own time; streaks of bright cloud are wandering round their promontories, and others stand out behind, illuminated against a deep blue sky. Except for the darkness of tone, especially in the sky, it is a work of simple naturalism, and might be taken for an early Turner: indeed, it reminds one strongly of parts of the *Liber Studiorum*; and few exercises can be more useful to

<sup>1</sup> Serchio.

a landscape student than that of comparing Masaccio's work with the two impressive sketches of late sunset which Mr. Ruskin has placed beside it for that purpose, called 'The Lombard Apennine,' and the island church in Venice called 'S. George of the Seaweed.' Benozzo Gozzoli and others also seem to have had much feeling for the landscape of valleys and plains, but still to have treated it only as background: nor does Ghirlandajo go further. To counterpoise Masaccio's advance in figure drawing, Mr. Crowe says with justice, that the traditional, and so to speak symbolic countenance of our Lord, derived from Byzantine sources, finally disappears from Art in his pictures<sup>1</sup>.

This book is intended for students desiring to gain the power of representing Nature; and afterwards, perhaps, of creating something by composition or invention of their own, when their skill is secured them, and their memories are well-stored. Consequently we have selected our historical examples from the student-masters alone; from men who shewed all the virtues and powers of progressive search after the Beautiful. Essays on Rafael and Michael Angelo would extend this book far beyond its proper limits: it is better for us to give some idea of the men by whose genius such schools of the painters were formed as could instruct Rafael and Michael Angelo, and freight, arm, and launch their all-seeking and all-conquering genius on the sea which grows ever wider to the end. For the rest, we have one more of the earlier advancing masters

<sup>1</sup> Note B, p. 142.

of painting to speak of—one who seems to mark the advance of Art from the days of Giotto, and once more to unite, as he did, all the great gifts of manly piety, humour, and realism, of simplicity and delight in his Art above all earthly things, of endless rapidity and thirst for labour until death,—to possess the broad vigour of Masaccio, mixed with the peace of Brother John of Fiesole. Into such men, above others, it pleases God to breathe what men call, by analogy, the Inspiration of Art. That is to say, He breathes into them the gift of feeling and expressing in form and colour the beauty which He has made. And such a man was Dominic, son of Thomas Bigordi, goldsmith of Florence, called Ghirlandajo, weaver of gold-plate crowns or garlands.

## NOTE A, TO PAGE 133.

## 'DEATH OF MASACCIO.'

'AN inexplicable mystery overhangs the last days of Masaccio. His disappearance from Florence gave rise to whispered rumours of poison, which still vibrated in the atmosphere of the sixteenth century. Yet the truth was, nobody knew what had become of him. He left the finest fresco of the Brancacci Chapel unfinished, and abandoned Florence, his mother, and brother. They had to answer for debts he could not pay. His creditor Niccolo di Ser Lapo (another painter) claimed 68 lire. The officer of the Catasto again presented its income-tax paper, but in vain. The paper still exists, filled up in part from Masaccio's form of 1427, but sent back, with these words, in a strange hand: "Dicesi è morto in Roma;"—and Niccolo di Ser Lapo, in *his* return for 1430, despairingly says: "Masaccio died in Rome, and I don't know whether I shall get any part of my debt, as his brother says he is not the heir."' (Crowe and Cavalcaselle, ch. xxv. vol. ii. p. 547.)

## NOTE B, TO PAGE 140.

## 'MASACCIO'S MODELS.'

THE loss of traditional features or types from Religious painting is certainly to be regretted in some measure. In Masaccio, it seems to have been a necessary consequence of his discoveries in Art, and of his great advance beyond all traditional treatment. The statuesque power of his figures has been noticed, acquired, as it probably was, under Donatello's influence, and by means of severe study from Nature. It is difficult to say how far the beauty of the old Italian, or Etruscan, type of form had impressed Masaccio. The Adam and Eve in Paradise, of the Carmine, are certainly Gothic figures: but in the Expulsion from Paradise his models seem to have been of lower stature and broader form. His S. Peter, too, and others of his figures in the same frescoes, seem to pre-figure the curly and Herculean holiness of the Apostles in Rafael's Cartoons. The Fallen Adam and Eve of the Carmine were almost literally adopted by Rafael—in fact, as has been so often repeated, the influence of Masaccio over him, as well as over Michael Angelo, seems to have been almost unlimited.



## VI.

GHIRLANDAJO. (1449—1493.)

GHIRLANDAJO and his works mark a period in Florentine, and indeed in Italian Art, which is analogous to that of completed growth in a flowering tree. The stem, or technical frame of scientific knowledge of drawing and materials, has been built up to maturity: throwing off stronger and greener branches continually as it grows towards the light: Masaccio, Benozzo Gozzoli, and Filippo Lippi are the last powerful side boughs, and one more leading shoot springs up in Ghirlandajo before the tree bursts into flower and fruit with Fra Bartolomeo, Rafael, and Michael Angelo. The whole growth of Art may be studied in Florence and in the works of the Florentine School, if its final perfection, in colour as well as form, is to be seen in Venice in the works of Titian and Tintoret; and though the greatness of Leonardo and Luini must never be forgotten (and the influence of the former throughout Italy was no doubt immense)—still, in so slight a sketch as the present, it is sufficient for us to abide by the artistic succession in Florence only. There is no other place in the world where any ordinary visitor, with no more knowledge than ‘Murray’s Handbook’ will give him, may at least get an idea—and, so to speak, from the actual documents—of the transition from

Cimabue to Rafael and Michael Angelo. It is possible in a few days to observe the whole progress of Art, from the Borgo Allegri picture to the Madonna del Cardellino and the Seggiuola, or to the Fates and the Duke Lorenzo, by inspecting the works themselves. Nor is there any place where the decline and departure of original vigour and noble art is better marked, sinking as they do for ever with the last hopes of Florentine liberty.

A highly important step has been made of late in Florentine photography, which promises results of the greatest value to students. Not only are negatives of the great frescoes taken, wherever it is possible (and great success has been obtained in most unpromising places by the aid of large mirrors and reflected light), but numbers of drawings by the great masters, in sepia, chalk, and pen-and-ink, are now photographed, and accessible in copy at a very low price. Mr. Philpot<sup>1</sup> has, we believe, undertaken this work; and it seems to be one of great value to English Art. Nothing can be of greater value for the student than continual looking at great models, even though they be such as he cannot fully understand. All of us indeed are pretty much in this position with regard to the works of the great painters, since their actual processes are lost. The technical handling and use of materials which produced the Assumption and the smaller Paradise of Tintoret, which hang side by side in the Accademia of Venice, are probably

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Philpot's studio is at No. 17, Borgo Ognissanti; and his photographs can there be obtained for the small sum of 1 franc 30 centimes each.

unknown to our ablest painters. But the merest student would gain much by simply looking hard at those works for two hours a-day. And if he were taught meanwhile to pursue the course of labour which Titian and Tintoret went through, and encouraged by the sight of their rudimentary work, in which he can see every line and touch, he would certainly advance rapidly and solidly. In a students' manual like this we have little to say, after all, about the finished works of great men; nor have we any idea of writing essays on Rafael, or analyzing Angelo. A few pictures will be named which are accessible in this country to almost every one, and which we should say ought to be looked at, thought over, and even studied from. But copying whole pictures is a dubious method of study, not suitable to every one, or to be required of every one<sup>1</sup>.

It is very different with clearly and simply-worked sketches and studies in sepia or pen-and-ink, such as are found in the Rafael Gallery at Oxford and in the various metropolitan collections. The commonest spectator can judge from them with what extraordinary workmanlike steadiness Rafael's hand worked: and see how his shades are expressed by steady lines, with the precision and evenness of fine engraving. Very little practice, too, will enable him to see that Michael Angelo's speed was never hurried, and that his rapid rightness of execution was founded on endless labour

<sup>1</sup> Broad studies representing the light and shade of the whole picture are most valuable practice; as also studies of the parts in exactly-copied colour. But the whole work of a great master can only be well copied by a man of nearly equal powers.

and habitual precision. We may have to return to this—at present we recommend every artist or amateur, who is able to do so, to form a small collection of photographs from pen or pencil drawings, such as we presume are now being imported from Florence and elsewhere by Mr. Philpot and the gentlemen who are multiplying them. First thoughts and sketches for great works are of course profoundly interesting—but the student ought to look particularly for studies of parts, and careful line sketches whose touches he can follow: first, if he will, with tracing paper; then by fair copying.

In Florence, in July 1867, we bought, among many others, two photographs from drawings by Ghirlandajo, Nos. 690 and 692 in Mr. Philpot's list—one of a girl's head, the other of a piece of drapery, both works of extraordinary beauty, and the latter quite a typical or representative example of his wonderful drawing, in its simplicity and power and unsurpassed beauty of severe line. They seemed to us excellent specimens of his work, and instructive as to his way of working.

The name of Ghirlandajo belongs to a whole family—to Thomas Bigordi, the goldsmith or crown-maker; to Domenico, most famous of his sons; and the two others, David and Benedetto. Ridolfo Ghirlandajo was the grandson: son of Domenico, and heir of much of his power. Domenico's life was passed in Florence—'*Spartam nactus est, hanc exornavit*'—and he seems hardly ever to have left his native city, except on a visit to Rome before 1484, when he painted the great fresco of the Calling of S. Peter and S. Andrew, in the



Sistine Chapel. For a full account and description of his countless works, given with a rare combination of antiquarian and artistic knowledge and feeling, we must refer to Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle's second volume. Here, as in the life of Masaccio, Mr. Cavalcaselle's local knowledge, and industrious search for original sources of information, give the book a something of the charm of Vasari, with far greater accuracy. But recent study of some of the principal frescoes in Florence enables us to indulge in some brief description and comment of our own. All was well in July 1867 with the histories of S. Francis in Santa Trinita; but we saw the hand of the re-painter stretched out over Ghirlandajo in the choir of Santa Maria Novella—though, as it seemed, not unnecessarily or injudiciously. Still, when the process of renewal once begins, though it be on actually blank and obliterated passages of a fresco, one never can tell what changes it will work. As Ghirlandajo is said to have treated Orcagna in Santa Maria Novella, so may it be done unto him at this day<sup>1</sup>. What splendours of form and colour, of thought and devotion, and human power, so called, have come like shadows, and so departed, from those walls! How Orcagna first painted the principal chapel of the great Church of the Preaching Friars; how that body paid about as much attention to his work as they did to their vows of poverty, and let the rain stream down the walls and wash the frescoes out (exactly as we saw it doing to Giotto's Last Judgment, at Padua,

<sup>1</sup> He is said to have followed Orcagna's composition in the Ricci Chapel or choir, behind the altar of Santa Maria Novella.

in A. D. 1858); how the Ricci, the Tornabuoni, and the Tornaquinci combined to repaint the Chapel, to their own honour and glory; how the Tornabuoni utterly jockeyed and victimized the Ricci in the bargain;—all this is only our concern at present thus far, that it leads us to notice how freely Ghirlandajo introduces portraits into all his great works. He seems to have had no small share of Angelico's simplicity of mind, and, like him, to have enjoyed portraiture from natural regard for well-known faces and men he was 'used to.' Living in the world, Ghirlandajo had greater variety of subjects for portraiture; and the deep-marked faces of Lorenzo, Politian, and Marsilio Ficino look down from more than one fresco of his. They are surrounded in the Ricci Chapel, with numerous Tornabuoni and Tornaquinci. His own face, with his father's and the 'big brother' David's, who took his part and very literally fought for him, and would not let the monks slight him with bad soup and black bread<sup>1</sup>, are on the northern wall. The brothers are very like each other; of the Etruscan type of Italian rather than the Gothic, except in David's lofty stature and more pretentious look; with small well-shaped mouths, down-turned and rather mournful, and dark neatly-trimmed moustaches. On the southern side, in strong contrast to Politian and

<sup>1</sup> See Vasari. The brothers were treated with systematic neglect by the monks, until David violently assaulted the brethren who brought them their food, with one of their long-shaped loaves—which, if stale, as it probably was, must have been a very efficient weapon. Every feeling mind will be glad to be assured by Vasari, that the brothers got better dinners ever after.

Lorenzo, is the small Gothic head and noble slender form of Ginevra de Benci, turning her long throat and straight face to the spectator, and challenging, while the fresco lasts, the admiration which all men gave her in life. One of the youths of the Tornabuoni family, and a woman's face and figure in the Birth of John the Baptist, are, if possible, more beautiful still. Like nearly all Ghirlandajo's subjects, these are, without exception, faces and figures of the Northern type; and the Northern ideal is insisted on in his works as in other men's. Fair hair and bright cheeks and lips, long slender necks, small hands and feet, and tall forms prevail everywhere, corresponding to a certain sinewy look about his men which borders on leanness. It may also be observed in Donatello's S. George, and Michael Angelo's statue of Giuliano de Medici. But the statuesque effect of many of Ghirlandajo's figures is a chief characteristic of his work. There can be no doubt of his having received many impressions from the various details of his father's trade. He must have been employed in designing and modelling for him; and doubtless, like Orcagna, Verrochio, and others, received advantage from such practice, and from the habitual effort of the true artist in precious metal to make his workmanship as valuable as his material. Domenico's draperies are wonderful examples of modelling and drawing, falling as they do in severe and almost parallel lines, with broad shallow folds. Probably no painter, either of those who went before him or succeeded him, ever drew the form beneath the drapery and the relation of folds to under-form with more complete mastery. Like all the painters of his time

he was a careful student of Masaccio. The Brancacci Chapel in the Carmine, as has been said above, was literally the chief school of Florentine Art for centuries. But Ghirlandajo's mind seems to have turned in the direction of purely historical work, as we may call it, in which the draped form takes the place of the nude. Masaccio is the predecessor of Michael Angelo. In such figures as those of the Shivering Youth, and even more of Adam and Eve in the Expulsion from Paradise, one sees the foreshadowings, and indeed the models, of the great works of the Sistine. There is the same relation between these works as between Perugino's and the earlier productions of Rafael. Not to speak now of ancient sculpture, these works are the great models of human beauty for modern Art, and deserve as much attention in our own days as of old. For there is in them the highest degree of reverence for the beauty of men and women, without the least flavour of sensual feeling. It may be said of Masaccio and of his mighty grandson in Art, that they combine the most intense force with purity of mind and purpose; and their works are of the greatest importance now, when study of the human form is so much needed in this country, and when the necessity for it is beginning to be understood. That it is the principal, in fact the only means of right study and training, is a certainty; that it is the worthiest and final object for the painter is by no means evident: for, if real historical painting be the chief walk of Art, it is entirely out of the question to represent men naked, who *made* history clothed and armed. Ideal history of classical days, as of a golden age



when nobody wore any clothes, may be accepted and passed by. We have had enough of it: not but that it was of great use in the last generation. The principles and inspirations of David and the French Revolution had this great value for French Art, that they threw men on the study of the nude with high historical purpose; since he and his school at least selected subjects chiefly from Roman history, though their treatment was ideal rather than realistic<sup>1</sup>. But we do not desire to furnish students to a purely Nuditarian school who have no further object than flesh-painting, because we conceive that such a school, at least in England, would be the most grievous obstacle in the way of anything like widely diffused Art-education which can possibly be imagined.

Ghirlandajo, at all events, clings to the draped form, and he is perhaps the last of the ancient masters who did so. It is not that his nude figures indicate want of knowledge in anatomy, or deficient study of the outward form; but that his taste and feeling led him to represent historical action in a straightforward manner, and that he considered the study of muscles and bones a necessary preparation for historical subject, not the real object of Art. More accurate science, formed on knowledge of structure, gained by dissection and practical anatomy, was to come with his great pupil.

They are said not to have worked together on good terms: perhaps the goldsmith's son thought the

<sup>1</sup> We may refer to the great beauty and perfect purity, in conception and execution, of the nude works of Ingres, the pupil of David.

young Michael Angelo too poor and proud;—though it is pretty clear that the youth deserved his salary, 24 florins, from the first. As the elder Buonarotti's objection to his son's undertaking so humble a trade is matter of history, it is quite possible that he may thus have given Ghirlandajo more offence than he ever did by direct slight or ill treatment. The veteran master, nearly his pupil's equal in power, quite matching him in the painter's thirst of labour, full of gathered knowledge, and recognized prince of his art, must have early recognized one fact in his pupil—that he meant to take his own line and Masaccio's. These considerations, with that of Michael Angelo's occasional sharpness of temper and expression in early days, may have turned his master's mind against him<sup>1</sup>. What is said of Ghirlandajo's early jealousy of him is said even more invidiously of Titian with regard to Tintoret; and the more honourable anecdote of Verrochio and Leonardo is confirmed by the picture now in the Academy of Florence<sup>2</sup>. Perhaps in the two first cases each master may have felt that his pupil was strong enough to make his own way on principles of his own; and that for the sake of less able followers who needed implicit obedience, he could suffer no rival near his throne. We have heard of two knights on one horse, but never of two masters in one studio. If Ghirlandajo did really keep Michael Angelo in the

<sup>1</sup> Torrigiano's flattening his nose with hammer or fist will be remembered.

<sup>2</sup> No. 43, catalogue of 1866. Verrochio gave up painting on seeing the superior beauty of an angel's head painted by Leonardo in his picture of Our Lord's Baptism. (See Vasari.) The head is exquisite.

background, it only shews, first, what any master in his senses would do to a promising pupil; and secondly, it indicates his early perception that an ambition, principles, and feelings were at work in his studio different from those he honestly thought the best. Masters, like parents, may often expect their children to be precise copies of themselves, or to take up their work with exact imitation; and no amount of experience in either case seems to teach them that they look for either an impossibility or a disappointment. It is certainly curious, if true<sup>1</sup>, that the pupil of the great master of broad fresco should have practised it so little as to find the Sistine paintings a new, and at first an uncertain, kind of labour. But grandeur and breadth in covering a space with marshalled composition of numerous figures was clearly learnt, in some degree, by Michael Angelo from his master; and he seems along with it to have inherited his master's rapidity and decision in execution. Though there is often much stippling and hatching in Ghirlandajo's work, it is done rapidly and with decisive purpose; the hatched lines being drawn in different directions according to the surface required, and rapidly and beautifully modelled. One of the photographs to which we have referred, that of the girl's head, illustrates this in a remarkable way. His drapery and broad forms seem to have been painted in with all the sweeping power of Masaccio, only in severer lines; the higher lights kept till last, and painted on in thick body colour: and throughout the work he seems to have known

<sup>1</sup> See Duppa's Life of Michael Angelo.

every form by heart, so as to lay on each broad touch in planned and decisive shape; which is certainly the secret of all water and body colour, if not of all painting. Some great men, as Leonardo, have been practically incapable of painting in fresco, from indecision as to what to do. It is true their indecision has been that of varied knowledge, and their fastidiousness that of long experience and labour. But there seems to have been a dash of pride besides in the conscientiousness which sometimes prevented Leonardo's finishing his pictures at all. And though we have abused the monastic patrons of the Frescanti, as we think, with no more than a strenuous moderation, it must be admitted that they may have had reason to think that Masaccio, perhaps, kept them out of a chapel too long, or Leonardo out of a refectory. Delay always involves expense, as the painter must live all the time he is changing and amending: and of all the recriminations between patrons and artists which are eternally going on, the most provoking are founded on the fact that a modern fresco takes so very long to do, that the painter must be paid for his time, and that if he is a man of name and mark, his time will be worth a good deal. And, without doubt, wall-paintings ought not to be finished like oil-paintings. Ghirlandajo was eager for both kinds of labour to the end of his life; but any one who has seen his fresco and his oil-painting can see the absolute difference of his style and treatment. It is as if he rested over his altar-pieces; taking his pleasure in giving them their colour, their transparency and reflected lights, and pleasant backgrounds of scenes he



knew and enjoyed as only a painter can enjoy them. He finished and polished them, and used the clear Peruginesque grey distance and transparent verdure<sup>1</sup> as tranquilly as if, in his hours of eager action, he was not desiring to paint all the walls in Florence, and actually painting a considerable proportion of them.

This power of speed, decision, and limited finish in fresco is insisted on as a great and chief desideratum in our British Art, by authorities whose opinion can hardly be disputed, in the evidence before the Royal Academy Commission. Many of the frescoes in the House of Lords and elsewhere are finished like easel pictures, and must necessarily be expensive according to their size. The worst is that when one of them is finished at last, and a bargain between Art and the State honourably completed, the artist has lost money by his work, and the State has generally lost temper and patience at his having spent so much time to his own disadvantage.

Ghirlandajo painted with a knowledge and power which leaves little room for criticism in his works: and his speed was equal to his power. But wall-paintings in every way imperfect, like Paul Uccello's in the Chioistro Verde of Santa Maria Novella, have been valuable and interesting ever since from their

<sup>1</sup> See in our own National Gallery, No. 296. The student will do well to notice such parts as the lily, brooch, or raspberry. He may study them if he likes. The yellow shades on flesh are remarkable, and the reflected lights on the limbs assist their rounding very artfully.

graphic power, and the keenness and vigour of the painter's mind, which is more marked in his rudest execution than his finest. Wall-painting evenly completed, without delicate finish anywhere, would be sufficiently speedy, and might be indefinitely cheap, if the walls were committed to the best pupils of a real Academy of Painting, under the guidance and from the designs of their own masters, or of men like Mr. Watts, Mr. Armitage, or Mr. Maclise. If educational frescoes are ever to be done in this country they will have to be painted exactly in the old way, rapidly by masters and scholars together, with confessed imperfection of means and time; and often, we trust, with the old genius and science which made glorious the swift efforts of the Gothic school.

Ghirlandajo died before 1493, before 'the French lances were shining in the passes of the Alps.' He did not see the evil time; and scarcely the reforms of Savonarola, or the Florentine gallows and fire which were the Florentine<sup>1</sup> prophet's reward. Nor did he see the bitterer but nobler days, when, as the author of 'Romola' says, the sons of Savonarola's followers, brought up under the influences of his teaching, made their last stand for liberty in the old Florentine fashion. His aristocratic pupil had then to turn his all-embracing genius to engineering and fortification, like Durer or Leonardo; to seize on San Miniato, and secure Florence at least from storm and sack; and to return once more, escaped from the bloodhounds, to the Day and Night of the Lorenzo Chapel<sup>2</sup>. With him and with Rafael

<sup>1</sup> Ferrarese by birth.

<sup>2</sup> See Duppa's Life of Michael Angelo.

ends Florentine Art; but in ending its course it becomes mistress of all the world. Further progress is reserved for Venice alone, with the help of Buonarotti's great works: and Tintoret's high-reaching motto sums up Art, perhaps for ever, with the aspiration which he alone has yet made into achievement:—

‘Il disegno di Michelangelo ed il colorito di Tiziano.’

## VII.

## ON THE STUDY OF FINISHED WORKS OF ART.

THE course of drawing which we have set before our student will, we trust, make him pay sufficient attention for some time together to casts representing some of the greatest works of Greek and Roman Art: and it will virtually teach him, we may hope, the right way of looking at other great models. For, as a student of Art, he must look on them with somewhat implicit faith: later in life, and as his powers increase, he may consider that they guide him in part, but are not entirely to dictate to him. He will then, probably, enter with a will, if he has not done so before, on the works of Michael Angelo. They are, as a rule, valued far more highly by workmen than by critics; and this may give us an opportunity for introducing a remark on lay-criticism. A well-educated man of taste, who is not a workman in Art, looks on great pictures and statues as poems; and is quite justified in expressing his feelings about them. What he says may be of the greatest educational value, when it is not against technical or historical fact: and he is sure to obtain more immediate attention than the artist, who paints and carves instead of writing. When he is wrong, the protest



of the best workmen generally makes itself heard against him, unless his notes die away of themselves. But the lay-critic's being right depends on his tastes, his feelings, his education, and his spiritual views and hopes for humanity and for himself. And our classical education seems often to do very little good, in this direction, though the want of it does so much harm. Greek history and knowledge of Greek Art certainly ought to go together; and as certainly they do not, in any English place of education we know of. Byron, the hater of Horace, was probably the best judge of a statue in Cambridge, at his day; and Porson the worst, or not one at all.

Whatever education in Art men ought to go through in order to talk about it, this book is for those who mean to practise it. Its lessons and exercises may be found rather difficult and irksome; but any one who can do them well is so far forth a workman; and whoever can do them all well is a trained workman, prepared to do justice to whatever original genius he may have, by design of his own. And when he has reached the point at which his own thoughts and character begin to be expressed in his work, he will look at works of great masters with the eye of a critic as well as with the technical eye, and enter more or less into the spirit that is in them. But all the while, the magnificence and quite mysterious greatness of their technical knowledge and power will contend for his admiration, and he will always find much to learn from Rafael or Michael Angelo, Titian or Tintoret. He will always get more and more from them of that deep enjoyment of truth and beauty which teaches Art

best of all things, because it is the essence of artistic feeling. Tintoret is only to be seen in Venice, and Titian is essentially the master's master, rather than the student's, save only that, as has been said, the latter may gain endless encouragement from seeing how much precision and steady severe drawing had to do with his unlimited success. And as the pure drawing of line and form in Rafael and Michael Angelo is so transcendent, as also so many sketches and unfinished drawings by both are within our reach, these two must be our chief rudimentary teachers—simply because we can see how they began and went on like other students, and ended beyond the reach of all other men. The sources of their education, too, are traceable for centuries, in the great Florentine succession from Cimabue: and as the history of modern or Gothic Art is best studied in Florence, we have chosen our representative painters from the banks of the Arno. We are writing for students, and the student-masters who between them completed the technical or 'scientific' part of the painter's craft have been our choice; and we commend to our readers, as pupils, only the rudimentary work, and early processes of our chief models. But colour may be learnt from Titian, though it cannot be taught by talk about him, or by writing. And the student must of course take every occasion of hard looking at any work of his, of John Bellini's, or Giorgione's (or Carpaccio's, or Cima de Conegliano's, if he like the earlier sacred work)—and especially of Veronese's. He will learn we know not what from them all. He will see, with perseverance, what is wrong or weak in his own work: he

will learn that putting rich colour on everything does not make powerful colour: he will learn to tone his crimsons with black and his yellows with brown, except in the one fold which admits the perfect hue. His greens will draw towards the subdued power of the olive-greens of Veronese, his yellows will be rich with gold and orange flashing sparsely out of their brown shadows: he will delight to see his reds take the glowing bronze of sunburnt limbs, which Titian and Veronese loved and dwelt on in their drapery as well as their flesh<sup>1</sup>. And his blues will be green in their lights and black and purple in their shades: and he will draw form always more keenly for the sake of purity of colour: and will carry the trenchant slash and varied pressure of the keen but delicate water-brush out in all his oil-work. Let him look hard and continually at Venetian colour: not, we think, at many pictures, but constantly at a few:—indeed, if he live in England, there are not many accessible ones to look at. Still, John Bellini's Doge Loredano (No. 189, National Gallery), his Madonna (No. 280), the noble picture ascribed to him or Giorgione (No. 234), and the supreme and matchless little Giorgione (No. 269), may teach colour to ages to come: and generations of true workmen may go on gaining strength from the Pisani Veronese, or Titian's *Noli me Tangere*, or from the Ariosto.

We have said nothing of Leonardo or Velasquez<sup>2</sup> or

<sup>1</sup> I am sure the indescribable tones of the clear Venetian russet-red were first brought to the painter's mind by study of sunburnt flesh.

<sup>2</sup> It is said of Velasquez, by Mr. Ruskin, that 'everything he does may be taken as absolutely right by the student.' This dictum seems

Francia, or many another whose works ought never to be passed by; because the works named for study are, perhaps, enough for a young painter to choose his favourite copies or models from. The parts must be well studied, as the snake's head and the faun's wreath in Bacchus and Ariadne, and the pearls on the rose-coloured dress in the Pisani Veronese, which shew something of Veronese's manner of work<sup>1</sup>. The student of Rafael's earlier work, finished or unfinished, will have gained some idea of Perugino, especially of the technical excellence of his pen-and-ink, or hard-point drawing, which his great pupil evidently inherited<sup>2</sup>.

More colour-power is gained, however, by hard water-colour practice from Nature than by anything else, if the pupil will only match his colour from Nature. If he will do that he will soon find himself beginning to understand Turner's work: and if that should lead him right away into landscape and mountain-drawing for a

to us correct. And thus much may be added to it as a matter of feeling and treatment,—that the truth of Velasquez is like scarcely any other man's: and his treatment of homely faces, and love for the features of his countrymen as they really looked, is of the greatest value as an example for the English Realist School. Diego will not flatter king or kaiser, nor yet will he take a line out of an old woman's or a shepherd's face for beauty's sake, yet all the while he is *par excellence* the painter of kings and the ennobler of old women. He has the pride of times when Spain had reason to be proud: but he is a humbler man than a German Idealist, who is too pure for colour, and can produce beauty by rule. The boy's and old woman's faces in the Adoration of the Shepherds (No. 232 in the National Gallery) ought to be what Mr. Ruskin calls 'a revelation' to a young Realist painter.

<sup>1</sup> See *Modern Painters*, vol. v. p. 193, a chapter to be studied by all painters.

<sup>2</sup> His steadiness of line in shading is wonderful; but the hands and feet of his figures are often unnaturally small.



time, that is worth a man's life, and certainly it is worth the leisure hours of a life. But 'Hinter dem Berge sind auch Leute;' after Nature comes Man; and a higher landscape, with powerfully-painted figures, may yet arise in the English School, which shall have Nicolas Poussin's dignity and power without his bastard classicism. Lewis's pictures, and even sketches, are most important, as combining absolutely perfect workmanship in human, animal, and landscape painting, and so are the finished works of Hunt and Millais, and of many rising masters of our own schools.

We hope that this book will be found to prescribe copying enough for the advancing student. But it aims at assisting men who may turn out something more than copyists. We trust some such may use it, and soon make it useless to themselves, and advance far beyond it. And one way to do so will be to work in its spirit; that is to say, to reverence and study the work of all great ones of the past, remembering continually that greatness is to be sought as they sought it, chiefly by the study of Nature herself—not as their weaker followers or imitators sought it, by exclusive study of the pictures and statues, by which they had first expressed their delight in Nature. There is a difference between loyal service and servility; and Rafael is best followed by those who copy what Rafael copied. He who has well obeyed a good and strict master in an English Art-School through his elementary course, deserves, or should deserve, a certain liberty or choice of his own in his work: he should have learnt enough obedience to be able to command

—himself at least. Every man is one's teacher, from whom anything is to be learned; but original work is original work, and a true workman from Nature may answer with the measured pride of Evan Dhu Maccombich<sup>1</sup>, 'Master—my Master is in Heaven.'

<sup>1</sup> Waverley, vol. i.

# PICTORIAL ART.

## PART II. PRACTICE.

### CHAPTER I.

**I**T was stated in the introductory chapter of the First or Theoretic Part of this Manual, that an alternative existed between beginning to work at Art with line-drawing (which is the preferable way in all cases), and beginning altogether wrongly, with washes of colour, and attempts to produce landscape without the study either of Art or Nature. What that alternative is we shall endeavour to shew. It is a way which may lead the student to good and profitable landscape sketching and colouring, and enable him to understand advanced work, and the higher finish<sup>1</sup> of modern water-colour. But the best thing to which this concession to landscape amateurs can lead is still—what we recommend from the first—the usual and severe course of free-hand and light and shade drawing ‘from the flat and from the round.’ It cannot be expected but

<sup>1</sup> Here as everywhere, be it understood, we mean by finish, more perfect rendering of facts in detail, and completion by putting in additional truth. A tree-trunk in one of Turner’s pictures is more finished than in one of Constable’s, because it gives us more facts about the moss and weather-stains, and old insertions of boughs, and age of bark, and muscular strength of the tree, and so on.

that most full-grown persons (in particular) who are inclined to take to drawing from awakened sense of natural beauty, will want to begin their work at the wrong end, or at least in the middle. They see wonderful and complicated subjects, in varied and ever-changing colours; they naturally wish as soon as possible to produce something like them, and ask for a short way to learn to reproduce a grand landscape. It is a sign of real progress when they begin to have a clear idea of the difficulty of doing this: despair of it, in fact, is a hopeful sign. But when the hope of great things all at once has been given up, if the honest eager impulse remains with them to produce some record of remembered beauty in Nature, it is a pity they should not try. They cannot, if they are in their senses, expect to begin at a successful end; and we can but furnish them with as advanced a beginning as possible—with such a course of drawing as shall enable them to face natural scenery with some prospect of producing intelligible sketches of it. We hope that practice of this kind will bring them, as has been said, to some sense of the difficulty of what they wish to do, and also of the immense value to themselves of genuine success: so that a little progress and a good deal of failure, in an amateur way, may bring them to begin their work at length in an artistic way, with straight lines and free-hand.

To those who want to copy popular water-colourists, and call for water-colour washes that they may produce bad imitations of indifferent chromographs, we have no observation whatever to offer, nor could we expect any attention from them. We are attempting to describe



a course of study by which a certain skill in landscape (or indeed other) drawing may be attained, without going through all the severe indoor or scholastic training of drawing in line or from casts. And we hope that such skill, once reached, will shew the student the necessity of beginning at last with the real training which he has hitherto declined.

Albert Durer is the great drawing-master for the eager landscape student in his first essays; Turner, as his skill advances. But before we give examples from either, we must try to analyze the untaught feeling, and see with the willing yet unpractised eye of, say the girl of sixteen or the lad of twenty, whose eyes are opened by a first visit to Scotland or Switzerland, or even who has just seen lowland scenery transfigured by flames of sunset or rose of dawn.

They do not see much in a rational or conscious way, so as to trace or command it with the eye. What they do see is, of course, first of all the outlines of distance—either of mountain, flat horizon, or perhaps clearly defined and heavy cloud, in which part or the whole of the horizon is lost. And, in trying to put it on paper, they always begin with the most distant line they can see. That is perhaps correctly drawn; and then comes a search for more lines, and a discovery that on the whole there are none, or none such as will ‘fall together’ into a picture. There is nothing but form, and masses of form: and though they cannot express it, the difference between form and line is then first practically shewn them. Then comes the usual call for a short way and a drawing-master, often not to teach drawing, but to teach them to evade drawing. They say they want to

learn composition: that is to say, learn to caricature the face of Nature into lines and masses by receipt. Or else the sketcher begins to see how much there is in Nature, and that he must begin by learning to draw all he can of what he sees, instead of thinking what he is to leave out or not to draw. This may be said to be the regular invitation of sham Art. Learn to omit, to slur; to generalize, to wash out, to arrange masses, to get effects—to do anything but draw what you see, and try to bring Nature to book resolutely. Nothing but practice and failure will teach the great lesson, that power waits on method and headwork, and swiftness on steadiness, and brilliancy of rapidly-laid colour on precision of line—line so slowly learnt, but so quickly drawn when once learnt. Real power of composition must always be the ultimate reward of experience of Art and Nature, developing natural gift. It cannot perhaps be learnt by study, but it comes with right study.

I know no better way of beginning to prepare oneself to draw from Nature than is given in the Course for Landscape Amateurs in this chapter. It is intended for adults, and for persons who already know something of drawing and the use of brush and colour; even supposing them unwilling to face what they always call ‘the drudgery’ of free-hand drawing. No one who will not attempt it with some care is ever likely to be fit to draw from Nature at all, that I see: every one with the least true love of Nature must enjoy Durer’s or Turner’s rendering of her forms. The system is not adapted for very young people. They ought to begin in the right way, with right lines. Docile children ought to be docile enough for that. But if they will only draw

their lines faithfully for a part of their time (as large a part as possible) they may be allowed to go in advance a little, and try harmless experiments. A little drawing from the solid, or even some use of colour, may be permitted the pupil from time to time before he has fairly passed through his course of free-hand line; not by way of improvement, but of refreshment, just to keep up his interest in his work. This applies to children of larger growth as well.

There are at pp. 176-181 in this chapter fac-similes of two backgrounds of two woodcuts from Albert Durer; also of the main lines of the plate of the *Mer de Glace* in the '*Liber Studiorum*,' engraved by Turner's hand, and reduced in size with correctness enough for our present purpose. There is also a photograph of a large stone on a glacier, with a woodcut of its principal lines, about twice its size. The student may use these to begin with, as he is directed below. But if he possesses and prefers any other Durer woodcuts, especially *The Cannon*; or any of George Cruikshank's earlier etchings; or of Richter's; or Alfred Rethel's *Death the Avenger* and *Death the Friend*; or any of Leech's woodcuts which have landscape in them, as various hunting sketches, and especially the *Adventures of Mr. Briggs out Deer-stalking*;—above all, if he can get the etched lines of an engraving from Turner's '*Liber Studiorum* <sup>1</sup>,'—he may proceed with any one of them, as follows:—

<sup>1</sup> A photograph of the original etching of *Cephalus and Procris* in the '*Liber Studiorum*' has been most kindly given me by Mr. Ruskin, for use in this book. It will be found reduced in size at the beginning of the chapter on *Tree-forms*.

## EXERCISE I.

Make a careful tracing on transparent paper of the main lines of your woodcut, drawing them in *right*, line for line and touch for touch, making as perfect a fac-simile as you can. You will not be able to get the right thickness or firmness of line at first, but get all the forms and directions of the lines safe<sup>1</sup>. Then transfer your tracing to drawing-paper very carefully. Having done so, set your copy before you, and imitate it in pen and ink freely over your traced lines, touch for touch; or you may use a fine pencil, if you please. By the main lines to be drawn in, I mean all the *significant* lines you can trace; if there are any which are evidently meant only to indicate shade, they may be left out at this stage of your work.

By repeating the same lines freely, it is not meant that you should only 'ink over' the traced lines, but imitate them; say at an eighth or sixteenth of an inch distance to right or left, so that your hand repeats its work freely. Take care that your lines are even in breadth, whether they are fine or broad. In pencil or pen and ink it is a great object, and great sign of progress, to be able always to get a firm even line. Always move the hand as much as possible from the shoulder, difficult as it seems at first. In point of fact, cramped work with the fingers is much more uncertain and shaky than the play of the whole hand. You can practise in writing. Nervous hands always shake at first beginning work, and gather steadiness as they go on.

<sup>1</sup> You will be surprised at the difficulty of getting anything like a fac-simile of such lines at all. But never mind; that difficulty is exactly what you will learn most from.



## EXERCISE II.

When you are tired of the exertion of careful line-drawing, which is not small, you may take up the following lesson, which is copied, by kind permission of the author, from Ruskin's 'Elements of Drawing.'

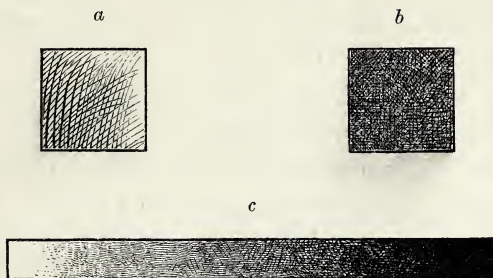


FIG. 1.

'Take any finely-pointed steel pen (one of Gillott's lithographic crowquills is best), and a piece of quite smooth, but not shining, note-paper, cream-laid, and get some ink that has stood already for some time in the inkstand, so as to be quite black, and as thick as it can be without clogging the pen. Take a rule, and draw four straight lines, so as to enclose a square, or nearly a square, about as large as *a* Fig. 1. N.B. I say nearly a square because it does not in the least matter whether it is quite square or not, the object being merely to get a space enclosed by straight lines. Now try to fill in that square space with crossed lines, so completely and evenly that it shall look like a square patch of grey silk or cloth, cut out and laid on the white paper, as at *b*. Cover it quickly, first with straightish lines in any direction you like, not troubling yourself to draw them much closer or neater than those in the square *a*. Let them quite dry before retouching them. (If you draw three or four squares side by side, you may always be going on with one while the others dry.) Then cover those lines with others in a different direction, and let those dry; then in another direction still, and let those dry. Always wait long enough to run no risk of blotting; and then draw the lines as quickly as you

can. Each ought to be laid on as swiftly as the dash of the pen of a good writer ; but if you try to reach this great speed at first, you will go over the edge of the square, which is a fault in this exercise. Yet it is better to do so now and then than to draw the lines very slowly ; for if you do, the pen leaves a little dot of ink at the end of each line, and these dots spoil your work. So draw each line quickly, stopping always as nearly as you can at the edge of the square. The ends of lines which go over the edge are afterwards to be removed with the pen-knife, but not till you have done the whole work ; otherwise you roughen the paper, and the next line that goes over the edge makes a blot.

‘ When you have gone over the square three or four times, you will find some parts of it look darker than others. Now try to make the lighter parts as dark as the rest, so that the whole may be of equal depth or darkness. You will find, on examining the work, that where it looks darkest the lines are closest, or there are some much darker lines than elsewhere ; therefore you must put in other lines or little scratches and dots between the lines in the paler parts ; and where there are any very conspicuous dark lines, scratch them out lightly with the pen-knife ; for the eye must not be attracted by any line in particular. The more carefully and delicately you fill in the little gaps and holes the better : you will get on faster by doing two or three squares perfectly than a great many badly. As the tint gets closer and begins to look even, work with very little ink in your pen, so as hardly to make any mark ; and at last, where it is too dark, use the edge of your pen-knife very lightly, and for some time, to wear it softly into an even tone. You will find the great difficulty consists in getting evenness : one bit will always look darker than another bit of your square, or there will be a granulated sandy look over the whole. When you find your paper quite rough and in a mess, give it up and begin another square ; but do not rest satisfied till you have done your best with every one. You will find it very difficult to get a pale tint. . . . You must get over this not so much by leaving the lines wide apart as by trying to draw them excessively fine, lightly and swiftly, being cautious in filling in, and at last passing the

pen-knife over the whole. By keeping several squares in progress at one time, and reserving your pen for the light one when the ink is nearly exhausted, you may get on better. The paper ought at last to look lightly and evenly toned all over, with no lines distinctly visible.

‘A graduated space, the dark tint passing evenly into the lighter ones, is the next exercise, as soon as the pupil has some command of the pen as a shading instrument.’ See Fig. 1, *c*.

These exercises may be repeated with the point of an H or HH pencil, or at least some of those which follow on shading must be taken up and done delicately with a hard pencil, using bread or india-rubber and the penknife-point to remove dark specks. It will be, on the whole, best to use chalk for practice, with the soft point and on a larger scale; and pen and ink in order to train oneself to hard-point or etcher’s work. The pen and ink have the advantage of being always at hand, and it is a really important gain to an amateur or young artist if he can form a habit of ready firm illustration with his pen. Drawing ought to be taught just as writing is taught; but nevertheless, as the latter must generally<sup>1</sup> come first in education, it is best to connect Art with it where we can, and to consider one’s pen as a drawing instrument is a very good thing for the student. In no other way will he so easily form the invariable painter’s habit of ‘always drawing something,’—always watching form and colour, always observing and imitating. Business is business, of course, and I do not recommend him to illustrate his books or correspondence; and yet I remember how the illustrated

<sup>1</sup> Not *always*. We have found it useful, in a night school, to tell a pupil, uncertain about the form of A, to ‘make his picture’ on a slate.

letters of a friend of times past used to be longed for and delighted in. The drawback, of course, to habitual sketching is that it is likely to induce carelessness in execution in some cases; but this risk may be safely run by any one who has trained himself by diligent tracing and copying from Albert Durer and from the lines of the 'Liber Studiorum,' and who has practised squares carefully enough to be able to etch an even tint with his pen. A week's practice at the exercises given or named in the text will teach the pupil a good deal about drawing: and when he has reached a certain point he may make steady progress only by working up spare hours or half-hours. It is impossible to say too much in praise of the habit of carrying a small sketch-book about, with a sharp F pencil in a sheath, for occasional practice from the object.

Remember also, that having undertaken to become something of a painter, you have undertaken to be an observer as well as an imitator, and that the painter's eye is always open. You should always be making at least mental notes of form or colour or effect. The well-stored memory, more than anything else, seems to distinguish great men from small. It is impossible to say how much imagination and invention owe to memory; they certainly could do nothing without it. You ought, as time goes on, to have a sort of mental scrap-book, which will suggest true forms to you in working at your pictures. It is almost impossible to say how far memory can take the place of invention in painting, just as one cannot tell how far it ministers to genius and power of thought in science or history. It may be developed in a morbid way by a person who has little



power of thought, and who has in consequence a vast storehouse of things he cannot use. 'Si quis emat citharas, emptas comportet in unum,' &c., applies to the man who has a vast recollection of facts as they occur in books, without power of arrangement, induction, or deduction. But the painter's memory is connected with so many perfectly secret and unknown springs of feeling and association, that it cannot well be overloaded, and may be trusted to arrange itself. Of course drawing from Nature or the real object must always be prior in time and in importance to drawing from memory, because Nature feeds and supplies ideas of memory. Yet even drawing from Nature implies the use of the mind in remembering an observed form in the object till it is realized on paper or canvas. You cannot look at two things at once, and you must determine from your object the form of your next touch, and remember it till you have put it on. Again, memory may be supplied from other men's work as well as from Nature. You have a right to imitate, though not to plagiarize; and the practical way to do right in such a matter is, I think, always to compare this or that man's rendering of Nature with Nature before you imitate him in your own work. T. M. Richardson's moorland and highland scenery is very attractive to sketchers, and deservedly so; but you should compare his moors with a real moor before you take to copying him. So of Cox's woods and weeds, or Copley Fielding's commons. When you have observed a form or a tint on the hill-side, and seen how these men render it, then you may take their assistance in rendering it for yourself, and they or any true painter will rather

thank you for it, feeling that their work has taught you something and been a real work of kindness and good to you. As a rule, never adopt or copy any feature of a picture without identifying it in Nature.

The Durer woodcuts will teach you better than anything else can the value of detail in landscape, and the power which is gained over Nature by manfully drawing in line all that comes in one's way. Ordinary modern water-colourists pay no real attention to form at all. Durer lets no form escape him; and by following him, first by copying his works, then by drawing from Nature as he drew, you fill your paper and your mind with natural facts. The wash of colour teaches nothing but technical handiness in laying it on, which is quite as surely acquired by studying *forms to lay it on by*. And do not fret at the infiniteness of what you see, or despair of drawing anything because you cannot draw all things together. Durer will teach you at least to draw anything separately, or a great many things together.







ALICE OWEN (after Durer).

You may perhaps form a conjecture about the present state of your natural powers for landscape, by the interest you are capable of feeling in Durer's distances, where every tree and bush is drawn, and nothing left unaccounted for. You may also judge of the correctness of your own eye, by the difficulty you will find in really making a fac-simile of his work. And so in a higher degree with Turner. An intelligent and perfect imitation of the lines of one of his landscapes implies at the least careful reading of Nature and long discipline of hand. This you are bound to try for. The best way of all is by going through a regular course of free-hand drawing, such as is taught in our elementary Art-schools, and described towards the end of this chapter, with examples. It is at least of almost vital importance to you to learn the use of straight lines for correct object drawing. At all events you may go so far as to learn to draw some simple object correctly by right lines, and then to try and draw it by your eye alone. You will see the difference between setting to work like a workman and like an amateur, in that real sense of the terms which we shall hereafter explain. In our view the best workman who ever held a brush was still an amateur, a man *loving* beauty and skill and their Maker and Giver, yet unable to reach the perfection of any natural work of His hand. And any amateur who does his best, i.e. chooses the best means, not the easiest, for the highest end he is capable of desiring, is a true though imperfect workman.

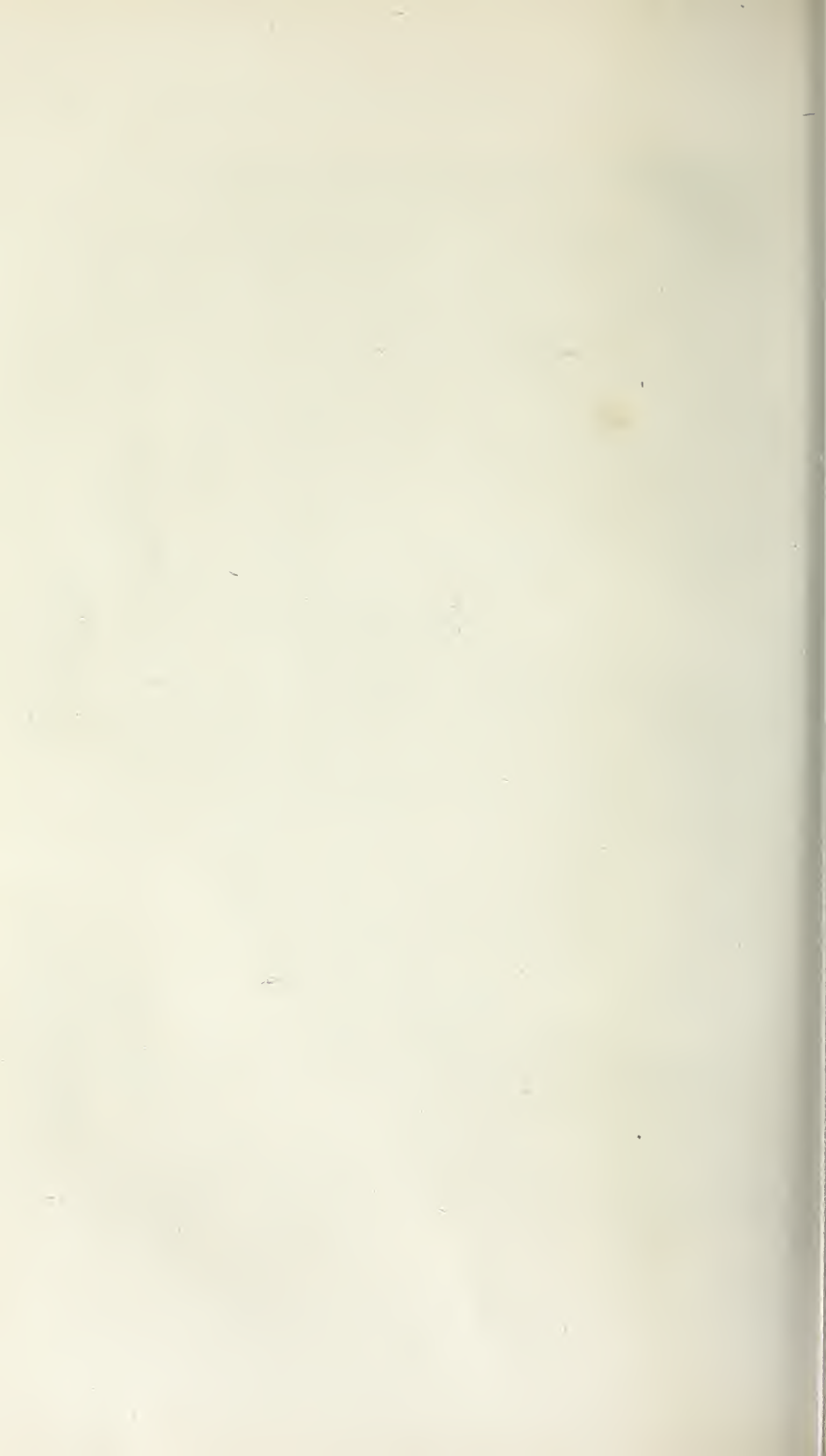
But if, in spite of all advice, you are determined not to draw straight lines; then take to your Durer tracings





*Mer de Glace.*

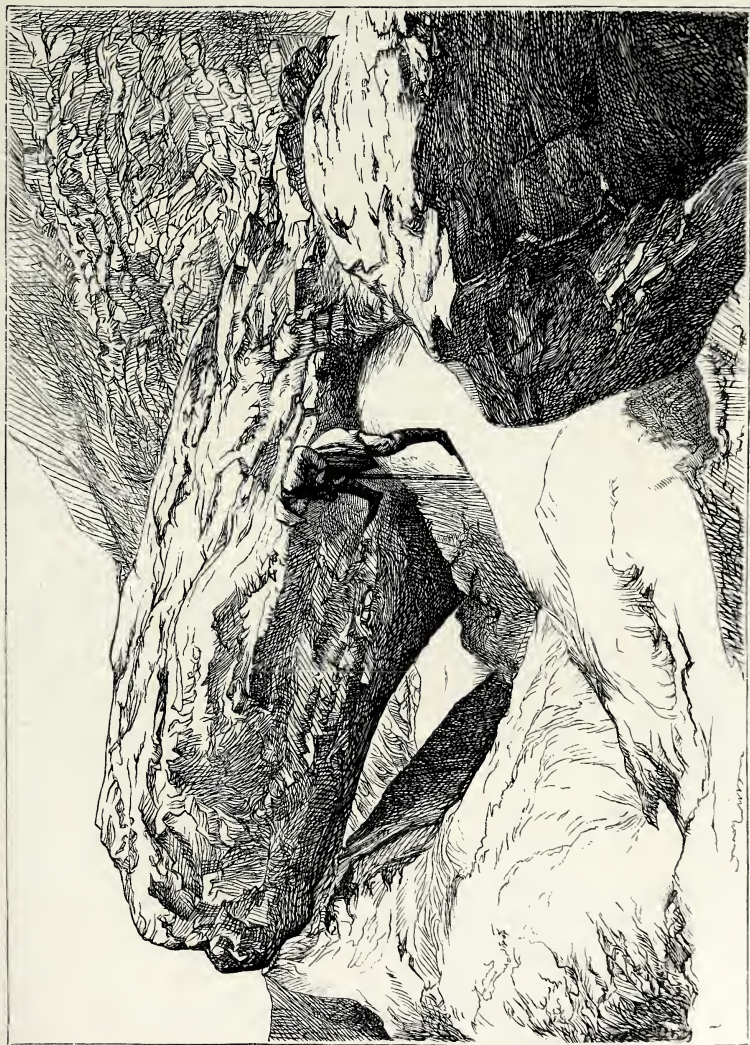
*R. St. J. Tyrwhitt (after Turner).*











R. ST. J. TYRWITT, from Photograph.



and the examples here given. But give your whole attention to them and do your very best, now and at all times, in Art; for in it, as in all things, no advance worth making is ever won easily. When you are a workman, you will do rapidly and right what you have often done before; but even then you will always find further advance strain your eye and put your mind on its mettle.

### EXERCISE III.

Take a simple photograph of some piece of landscape you rather like, not of a very striking or impressive subject, or of one which has any very exciting association connected with it in your mind. Trace all the main lines you can find in it, and transfer them to drawing-paper. Then set the photograph before you, and, using your traced lines as a guide, try to fill up your drawing in pen and ink, after Durer's manner, or in the fashion of the woodcut of the large 'erratic' on the glacier. Try to secure character before all things, and never mind how your work looks. Do not work too long at a time, as your eye and attention will get fatigued and unable to bid your hand do its work with precision; a tired eye is always disgusted and vexed with the look of its work, however good it may be.

If you have been used to sketch, you may try to work out some one small object from Nature thus, in pen and ink or with a hard pencil.

## EXERCISE IV.

Take a roll of whitey-brown paper, or a wooden cylinder, or a tennis-ball, or the cast of an apple. Let it rest on a piece of light grey or drab paper between yourself and the light. It ought not to be disturbed till you have done with it, and you ought to sit always in the same place, at the same distance and angle with the light. Observe its light side and its dark side, and the shadow under it which is darker than its dark side. Mix a tint of sepia which is as deep or nearly as deep as the shadow, and mark with it the place of deepest shade. When it is dry, take a rather large brush and the lightest tint you can make, and carry that all over the rough outline you have made. (Better draw a square first, then a circle within it touching its sides, if you have a ball to represent.) You will then have your darkest point of shadow and your high light marked, and your object is to get the greatest possible gradation between those two tints, so as to give the greatest possible roundness to your cylinder or ball. You should repeat this exercise many times, and each time on a different scale. The larger copies should be made in sepia, or with chalk or a broad pencil, using intersecting lines as in the 'square exercise;' the smaller ones must be in pen and ink, and in all the gradations must be brought right, that is to say, led imperceptibly into each other from light to dark. There must be neither streak nor spot. When one occurs, especially when you are using the brush and sepia, do not rub out, but try to fit in



the intrusive shade by means of lines drawn all round it, 'hatched,' or lightly drawn across and across. The exercise in squares has in effect taught you how to do this, and there is great value in this kind of practice in correction, or working wrong into right. It gives you confidence in being able to mend your work into something at last in every case; it educates your eye and hand in firmness and patience; and it will also give you so much trouble, that you will instinctively avoid it as much as possible by caution and precision in your beginnings. The drawing of the pomegranate (ch. ii.) will give you some idea of what workmanlike accuracy of shading really is, and will be a good model for you as your skill advances.

It is good practice to draw a deep strong line across a piece of light shadow, and then work the shadow darker, hatching across and across, till the line is imperceptible and only forms a part of the mass of shade.

If you wish, however, to wash out and begin again, be careful in all cases to wash *clean* out and leave nothing behind.

These exercises must be repeated over and over again until you can produce a well-rounded drawing of an apple or a ball with certainty, and in a moderate time. By the time you can do so you will begin to see how much form has to do with the laying on of shades, much more of colours. Even in so simple a thing as a tennis-ball it makes all the difference between good work and bad to lay on the different coats of shade rapidly, and with a sense of the shape of each shade you are putting on. With a round object,

these shades will mostly take a crescent form. Each must be suffered to dry perfectly before another is laid over it; for the standing rule of all water-colour is never to touch any tint twice until it is dry, right or wrong. It will be well at first only to use one brush, and to leave the edges of the successive shades to be softened into each other afterwards by means of hatched lines. But you will soon find it convenient to work with two brushes; a smaller one to lay on the tint, and a rather larger one (always kept quite clean) to soften off the edges while still wet.

When you have fairly learnt the processes of rounding and gradating in sepia, turn to the piece of drapery in chapter ii. It is arranged to illustrate two different systems of light and shade, but will answer your present purpose tolerably well. First make a pencil copy of the engraving, paying some attention to the shading, and getting the folds and the undulation of the stripe tolerably right. Then arrange some piece of striped cloth or linen in the same way, place it where it will not be disturbed (it should stand against a plain wall or screen), and make a careful drawing of it, in pencil or sepia. A whitish or light-coloured ground with but few stripes will be best. Draw it carefully in lines first, until you know exactly where the shadows of the folds are to come on your paper. Then begin to paint them in, rounding and modelling the folds. If you cannot take interest in this, it is a bad sign for your prospects of ever becoming a draughtsman; but if you can get yourself to take pains at it, you will soon feel interest enough. As soon as you have put on one set of shadows, wash in a background of sepia half-tint, behind your drapery,

so as to get it to stand out as a *white* object, as it would tell in a large picture: then complete it as perfectly as you can.

You had better next begin to draw shells of broad and simple form; first in outline, then in sepia shading. Or you may go through a course of *single* flowers or leaves: if you will be content to *repeat* whatever you undertake till it is right, or to patch it into correctness at last. The great engineer's advice about the embankment applies to water-colour as well as water-works:—'Puddle it.' 'We *have* puddled it.' 'Puddle it again.'

But it will save you time and trouble in the end, and give you additional power from the first, if you will consent to begin at the beginning with the Student's Drill we are going to describe. There is one more exercise—a necessary piece of dexterity in gradating colour over a large space, which you will see the advantage of practising: it is the surest method of obtaining brilliancy in sunset or sunrise effects, or of getting clearness in large cloud forms. The works of the late W. Turner, of Oxford, were well known in the Old Water-Colour Society for their power of light and colour; and this was his sole method of gradation. Practise it at first with sepia only, and you will get an idea of the great luminous effect which can be produced by using the darkest colour; in short, you will see that light and darkness are truly relative terms.

## EXERCISE V.

Have paper properly stretched, or at least a full-sized sketching-block. Wet its surface with a flat brush—not drenching it, but wetting the *whole*. Slope it and let it dry till colour will not run on any part of it: and meanwhile prepare a good pool of water-colour, proportioned to the space you have to cover. Have clean water by you as well as that which you have used, and two rather large brushes (I like *long-haired* red sables for almost all kinds of work); fill one of them nearly full, and begin to lay on the mixed tint across the paper at top, from left to right: when it grows empty, drop two or three drops of clean water into the mixed tint with the other, or clean brush; mix up all with the working brush, and lay on the resulting tint, which will be just lighter than the first; nearly empty the working brush, drop in more clean water with the other, mix up and proceed till you have gone over the whole paper. You ought to arrive at the bottom of it with nearly clean water in your brush, and with-a perfect gradation from the top of the paper. Do not try to get on too strong a tint in one wash, the difficulty is too great, and repeating it is quite safe, if you allow it plenty of time to dry.

You will see, that having done this properly with any sunset blue tint (say cobalt and rose-madder) you may slope the paper (when dry) the other way, and lay on the yellow tint, of yellow-ochre or cadmium and rose, from the horizon of your picture where you mean the light to be strongest, to the top, over the blue-grey. A



skilful person will gradate from purple-grey to pale pink, and from that to yellow in a single wash, by dipping the working brush lightly in tints of rose-madder and then of yellow, whenever he drops in the clear water to lighten the blue. This is in fact substituting first the rose for the blue, then the yellow for the rose. But it requires great skill and steadiness, and cannot be done without that peculiar handiness with brushes and colour saucers, which seems to require long habit and experience in any man, and which some persons never gain,—not even though their eyes and hands are cunning enough on paper or canvas when the right brush is in their hands. We now begin our proper course at its beginning. At the end of it the landscape-amateur and the student who has worked through the course will be prepared to draw from the casts. We think the latter will almost to a certainty draw *casts* better than the former. But the former will as certainly learn much by doing them as well as he can. They will in fact throw him back on the practice of free-hand drawing in line, and it is our object to do so.

## STUDENT'S DRILL. EXERCISES.

1. Draw a straight line, by the eye, from right to left across your paper. Bisect it.

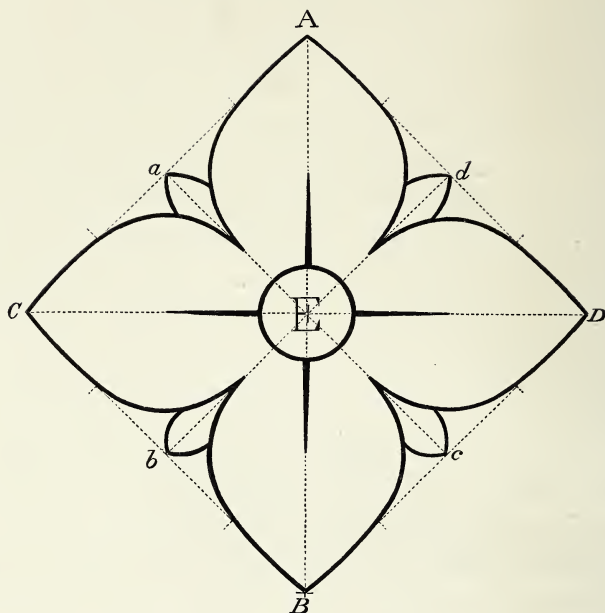
2. Draw another line at right angles to it from top to bottom of your paper. Bisect it.

3. Practise trisections of both these lines, and accustom your eye to take lines in thirds or halves at will.

These lines, and all others, are first to be sketched very lightly with a fine but not hard pencil, cut to a long and sharp point. Hold it long in your hand, and use it with a motion from the shoulder, not resting your hand or working from the fingers, only letting your little finger slide over the paper to steady you. When the lines are accurately traced out, they must be *almost* entirely rubbed out, and gone over again with an HH pencil and a firm single line. Great care must be taken to keep this line even. It does not signify whether it be broad or fine, provided it be always of the same breadth throughout. In drawing it you will of course have to rest your hand a good deal, to work from the fingers, and to make your line with short successive touches, *painting* it as it were, for precision's sake, and for even pressure on the pencil point. But still hold the pencil long, and rest the hand lightly, so as not to cramp the fingers. It will be best to measure distances at first, with dividers or a slip of paper, but always do so to correct your first sketch, never in the first instance, or before it is complete.

A page or two of the earlier part of 'Dyce's Outlines' will supply you with plenty of simple curves to copy by the eye, and a few are given here selected as proper

practice for the necessary use of straight lines. Some are regular and simple, others irregular and more complicated. When you can draw the easier ones with a fair amount of accuracy—that is to say, when your circles or ellipses are true, and drawn of the same size with the copy, though that copy be at a distance from your eye, you may proceed to the irregular and more varied curves. Something will be said in a chapter on Composition about natural curves, and there or here you will do well to read the 17th chapter of Ruskin's 'Modern Painters,' vol. iv. It may be said that all the most beautiful lines or contours in Nature are infinite, springing from their origin into space, and not returning into themselves; and also irregular, that is to say, not yet subject to mathematical calculation. And to be able to draw these abstract lines correctly by rule of thumb, drawing the proper tangents and co-ordinates without knowing anything in theory about tangents and co-ordinates, is what the eye of every draughtsman should be educated to do. Also, it is especially necessary for those to learn it who fret most against it. This uninteresting work is especially wearisome to those who have strong feeling for seen beauty, and want to produce it themselves by force of feeling without power. For some time they must be kept gaining power, without being excited by the beauty of what they copy; and practise the short rule for all curves; which is to 'put them in straight waistcoats.' The eye can always from the first be taught to judge of the length or direction of straight lines; and this is not possible with curves. This rule applies to all drawing of form, from the solid object as well as from the flat.



CURVE No. 1.

The continuous lines represent the figure to be drawn, the dotted ones those necessary for its construction.

Begin by drawing (very lightly) two lines at right angles to each other  $AB$ ,  $CD$ , making  $E$  their point of intersection, and  $AE = CE = BE = DE$ .

Join  $AC$ ,  $CB$ ,  $BD$ ,  $DA$ , and bisect them all by lines at right angles, intersecting in  $E$ , lettered  $ac$ ,  $bd$ ; bisect  $aA$ ,  $Ad$ , &c. all round. The curves of the stem leave  $Bb$ , for example, at the point of bisection ending half-way between  $b$  and  $E$ . Mark those points, and then draw the curve from one to another, beginning on the right line, and leading it away into the curve, at each end. Repeat this next at  $Bc$ ; as (N.B.) it is much easier to draw curves in pairs;—and so all round. You will have eight points to guide you in drawing your inner circle, the



circumference of which is half-way between E and the spring of the curves.

Having drawn all this lightly with an F pencil, rub it nearly out, just leaving enough to guide your eye: then go over the lines of the star with an HH pencil and a firm even line.

The straight rays from the circle are *ad libitum*.

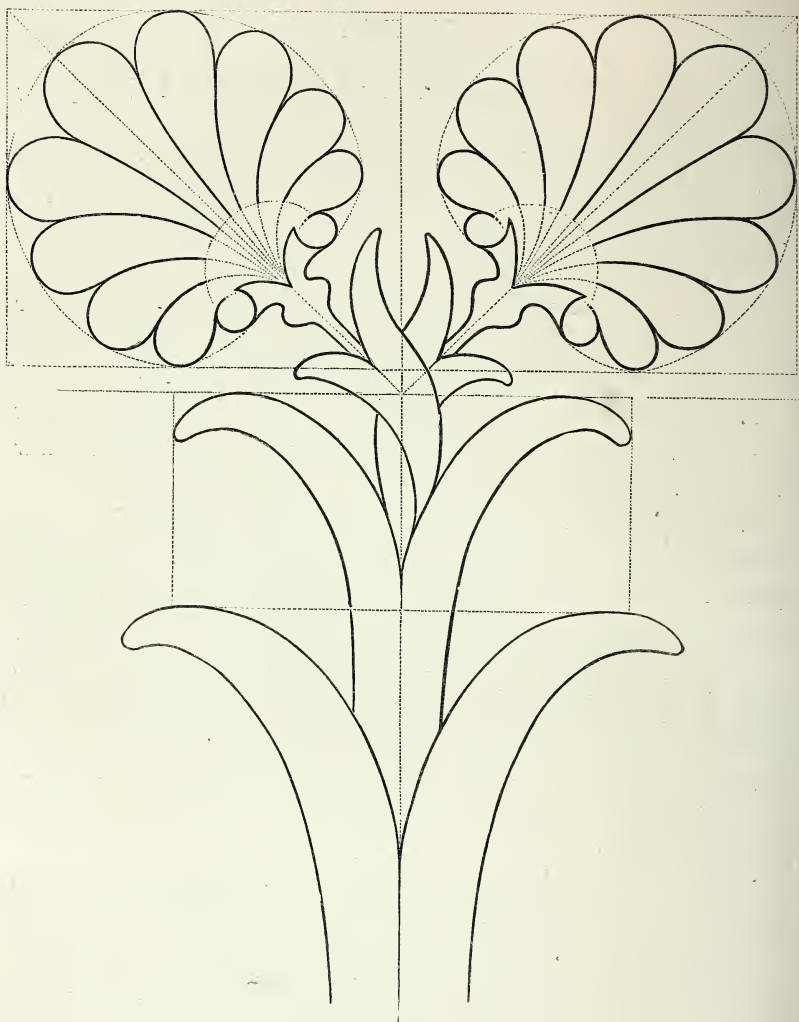
There are one or two cautions for drawing these and other subjects, which will probably be repeated more than once in this book; but they must at all events be given here:—

1. Notice whether your habit of eye is to draw too large or too small. The former is more general; most beginners draw about  $\frac{1}{4}$  too large; but the contrary is often the case.

2. Children and all early-beginners should always have the merest outlines or silhouette-forms to draw from. Perspective (even in bare line) confuses the attention at first, and early progress depends very much on a habit of success. First lessons, if possible, should be so easy as to secure the pupil from failure. This is why tracing is recommended in amateur drill. In making a traced outline on drawing-paper the pencil will move three times over the lines pretty correctly. It is better to do so at first than to spend twice the time in drawing the lines once incorrectly.

‘Dyce’s Outlines’ (price 4s. 6d., Messrs. Chapman and Hall, 193 Piccadilly) will be fully sufficient for any learner as a book of free-hand copies. The later examples are chosen mostly from Renaissance ornament, and might not benefit the pupil’s taste; but long before he reaches them he will be only too eager to close the book for ever and proceed to solid drawing. No one is likely to receive a bias from them, and no one can fail to learn to draw in line from them.

Do not fall into the habit of working too near your eye. You will see much better what your drawing will be like to others, and to you when finished, by keeping it a yard from your face at least.



CURVE No. 2.

Our second example speaks for itself tolerably well. First draw the large parallelogram which contains both the flower-ornaments. Then bisect it, continuing the perpendicular line. That gives you a central line : and a little below the lower side of the parallelogram is a point on the perpendicular which is the origin of all the curves. Straight lines drawn from thence would make each of the halves of the large parallelogram into a square. Diagonals of those squares will give you a centre line for the flower curves.

A second, and if necessary a third, parallelogram may be drawn from the line which passes through the origin of the curves, to guide the eye in completing the figure correctly.



CURVES Nos. 3 and 4.

These curves illustrate the process of blocking out by leading lines. The first thing, as will be seen, is to get the main curves right, by placing them in parallelograms. They may then be sub-divided.



CURVE No. 5. (*Natural Lines.*)



CURVE No. 5. (*Natural Lines.*)

This example is *nearly* contained in a rectangle, which will at once give you the scale on which you wish to draw it. Divide it by straight lines touching the chief extremities of the leaves. Then draw the main stem carefully as far as the last, or upper, four leaves: next, get the central line of each leaf, and draw the others round it, using guiding lines as in the copy. The upper four leaves had better be taken last, and may be inscribed in a small parallelogram of their own.

## REMARKS.

It is a question which is certain to come before every master of an Art-school very early in his career, how far he may modify or relax the excellent system of instruction which is laid down for him by our authorities. Pupils must have some indulgence from time to time, and it is difficult to say whether the younger or older ones will want it most. Those who want it least are not always likely to become the best painters, though for the present they are the best pupils; as there is a sensitive impatience of eagerness as well as the impatience of idleness, and older pupils of education and feeling are well worth breaking in, though they are always hurrying on into difficulties which they have not learnt to appreciate. They must be enticed into a certain amount of useful work somehow, and induced to invest effort and interest of mind in drawing straight lines, instead of spending it at once on colour or finished work. This is why the tracing and afterwards the pen-and-ink drawing from Durer has been put first in our course for grown or partially-instructed persons. It is conceived that those exercises, as well as that from the

photograph, will give the learner some idea of the multiplicity of Nature and of the difficulty as well as the interest of translating Nature into line. When it has been gone through, or as soon as the pupil is decidedly improving in exactness of hand and eye, some well-finished drawing of a simple subject in chalk or in sepia should be put before him, and an appeal should be made to him whether he had not better begin to do simple work in a workmanlike way, and really learn the necessary processes and exercises, instead of trying to pick them up irregularly. As soon as he has really learnt to feel the difference between correct and incorrect drawing, it may seem matter of common-sense to him to go well through that plain training in the use of straight lines which will enable him to command correct form. In short, he will consent to draw a few free-hand curves and patterns; and this done, he must consent further to go through a little more drill in shading, just to learn to lay on and gradate a tint with the point or fine brush in a mechanical way. The sooner our pupil is got to his egg or tennis-ball copy the better. And then, we think, he may be allowed to learn to stipple and hatch his work into flatness, either by use of pen and ink, in Mr. Ruskin's first exercises, or by the brush and sepia, or with chalk. Something is to be said in favour of each: the pen and ink is trenchant and fine, and gives confidence and pleasure in minute work; but it wearies the eye and keeps it too near its work. Brush and sepia are faint and delicate and give nicety in distinction of shade: moreover, as a man is to have the brush in his hand all his days, he cannot make acquaintance with it too soon. But he must learn to use the point so as to

get quite even shade and gradation with it, and the chalk point has great advantages for study, from the boldness and freedom which is gained in its use. Of course it is no use to be bold in wrong drawing, but straight shading-lines are easily drawn with a free hand. It may be well for a learner to get a habit of occasionally writing from the shoulder, letting his whole hand play on the paper: it will make his writing rather flourishing at first, but it is not bad practice for a draughtsman.

It is surprising how much neatness of stippling may be learnt by practising Mr. Ruskin's squares in pen and ink in any odd five minutes of time when one is left alone with that vehicle of expression. A spare quarter of an hour is time enough to draw a jar or inkstand in correct outline, or at least to take its distances and block it out in square, as in chapter ii. Practice of this sort is of the greatest value, as it gives speed, decision, and rapid calculation and eye-measurement better than anything else; and once begun it will be found pleasant enough. He who can once sit down and begin to draw a few folds of curtain or odds and ends, when he is left alone in a waiting-room, instead of reading the advertisements in the 'Times' or the bills on the wall, will soon have an amusing set of sketches, and, what is far more, he will always be ready to draw everything. There never is a time when a painter can afford to leave off studying pure form: even if he is given over entirely to landscape, he ought to keep studying the figure in line, and, if possible, on a large free scale. The French use of charcoal is admirable in work of this kind; and their system, as recommended by Mr. Armitage, appears less mechanical and more artistic

than our own, which was originally established rather with a view to training pupils to applied Art for commercial purposes, than with the idea of making painters. In the great French *ateliers*, the elaborate chalk stippling does not occupy so much time as in England. Time is devoted rather to continual and extremely accurate study of form by means of straight lines. 'The English students do not draw square enough,' say our neighbours; that is to say, they spend time on texture—and the toil of stippling and hatching really produces little more—instead of close continual measurement and calculation of distances and angles, and patient triangulation of the model. Nicety in judgment of pitch and flatness of shade may come after: all the pupil's time, till he can produce something worthy of high finish, ought to be spent in study of line, and in storing his ocular memory with facts and observations of subtle form. It is quite true, on the other hand, that the facts of surface-form are best learnt—perhaps can only be learnt—by long practice in shading; but it ought to be of significant shade indicative of form or structure.

The materials for study in use in French schools are charcoal and a paper stump for blending lines together, or for taking out half-lights. Bread rolled into a pencil-point is used to remove high lights, as in chalk drawing; and the work when finished is set by an application of mastic varnish on the back of the paper, which is quite soft and spongy. The main lines once obtained by careful calculation of the various distances and scrupulously exact 'square' drawing, or 'blocking out in straight lines,' the charcoal is hatched on and



rubbed with the stump and finger to tolerable evenness of half-tint over the main shades, and the work is then gone carefully over, every light in the copy being faithfully rubbed out with bread or the stump, and the stronger darks added afterwards.

It is also asserted, and we think that it may be true in the case of many highly-educated pupils, that some relief is necessary in another way. It is well to abstract form from colour, and for a time to give a student nothing but plaster casts to copy. But he ought also to see and make studies in light and shade from natural objects in colour as soon as he is able. It cannot be as instructive to him to work from a dirty-white plaster cast as from the original of the same in its natural bright colours; and any advancing student or amateur who wants the encouragement of a change of lesson may be supplied with a series of shells for study. The simpler forms should come first, the more difficult later; and when they have been successfully modelled in light and shade with brush and sepia, they may be repeated with some attempt to imitate their marvellous colours. It will be seen that the eye ought to be early accustomed to work in light and shade from natural coloured objects in the studio, in order to acquire power of estimating the value of various hues in terms of light and shade.

These remarks are addressed to masters rather than to pupils. We began with, and we hope to sustain throughout, a protest against all royal roads and all false progress; but we think that people learn the grammar of Art in very different ways, just as they learn any other grammar, and that, practically speaking,

it may be best that Art-masters should be allowed a considerable discretion in their treatment of different pupils. Some encouragement should be given as soon as the pupil can get a correct outline: the regular course should not be deserted, but he should be encouraged by being allowed to make experiments. Above all, he should begin to be admitted to see beauty in what he draws, and get accustomed to the excitement and flurry which delicate form and colour in a shell or a flower really produce in every keen student who has learnt to see. Fine execution is a means rather than an end, after all, and should be learnt as a means and not an end; if the pupil is over-broken to stippling and hatching at first, when he comes to Nature he will only look for things which he can stipple and hatch. In short, there is a difference between the restlessness of eagerness and the restlessness of idleness; and according to the master's judgment of him and what he will bear, he may allow him to attempt easy colour too soon, or to study with the brush rather than the point. *But in no case ought mathematically correct study of form ever to be long discontinued, for any reason whatever.*

Both in landscape and figure work it seems to me that as soon as the pupil has reached the point at which he may attempt original work in light and shade, he ought to be set to reproduce sketches of his own in imitation of two models. One, as we have said, is Turner's 'Liber Studiorum;' the other is Holbein. I have elsewhere mentioned the invaluable photographs from the latter artist published by Mr. Dowdeswell, Chancery Lane: and there can be nothing much better for the workman, young or old, than to study and

imitate them. They are not pretty; there is no Italian grace in them: but there is a good deal in Art besides such beauty as Correggio and Guido sought and found; and no one who has learned to understand and appreciate the insight, feeling, and technical power of these drawings, can have any reason to regret the time he certainly must have spent in learning to judge of Art. One may just mention the faces of the mockers of our Lord as examples of unmitigated Teutonic power in painful subject, and the standing female figure with her back to the spectator as a specimen of every beauty of form. The latter deserves attention, moreover, because her dress is nearly in accordance with one of the latest and most graceful of our modern fashions, and suggests the idea that if ladies would look a little more at pictures worth looking at, they would obtain some capital hints on the really important matter, as we consider it, of their own appearance. For every artist must feel it highly important that the most ornamental objects in creation should really be fit to be seen. But the way in which both Holbein and Turner's studies are made is worthy of great attention and careful imitation. The outlines are drawn firmly in pen and ink—probably in indelible ink; then the light and shade are put decisively and quickly on with the brush, so that the strong brown contours look no more than guiding lines, and assist the eye without offending it. No form of study can be better for the young workman who has made himself a workman, or something like it, by hard judicious practice, and who wants to try an idea or an impression of his own, or to realize a sketch for pictorial form. The

lines first, unalterably : then the forms in *chiaroscuro* up to the lines ; the flesh of the work gradually gathered to its bones until something of life and the spirit of the painter is breathed into the work. It is, of course, anticipating matters to say much here of original drawing. Yet all drawing from Nature is original, in the first and essential sense : it is distinguished absolutely from copying, because of the greater multiplicity and difficulty of the real thing as a copy. And some system of practice, either in rendering a natural object in terms of light and shade, or writing down a thought or idea in terms of light and shade, is highly important. Our course began with lines,—with Durer for multiplicity, with unmeaning straight lines, curves and patterns, to gain precision ; then it went on to technical and mechanical use of shade, since shade expresses form in Nature ; and lines, like letters, not existing in Nature, still teach men to understand form conventionally.

The next step is proper combination ; of line, with the light and shade which constitute form as distinguished from line. And such combination, as far as we can make out, is best seen either in the two sets of examples we have mentioned, or in galleries of sketches and preliminary studies by great masters, such as those of the University Gallery in Oxford<sup>1</sup>. The University now possesses a complete course of Turner's works, from his simplest broad chalk sketches or experiments to his most refined water-colour execution. And besides this, for the regular student, there are large numbers of

<sup>1</sup> A selection of most accurately-reduced copies of these drawings has been published by J. Fisher, Esq., Curator of the Gallery. (Bell and Daldy, 1867.)



Rafael's and Michael Angelo's sketches and groups, of very great intrinsic value, and quite priceless as models to copy. The use of the hard point everywhere is a great technical characteristic of these drawings, and it is very commonly combined with washes, or forms put decidedly in with the brush. These works ought to be put to their proper educational purpose; and, indeed, any one who wishes to study them can obtain permission to do so. First, careful copying, and secondly imitation, of these works of Turner and Holbein, will afford the best advanced practice in light and shade we know of.

## NOTE ON THE PHOTOGRAPH AND WOODCUT

AT PAGES 180, 181.

This photograph is inserted, because it seems to me to be a rather happy instance of natural lines converging in a very pleasing way, and is accordingly in itself a composition, such as the sketcher from Nature should look for. But though so well chosen by the photographer, it has not printed happily, and I fear the drawing from it needs apology. Still the large block of stone will do well enough to trace from, as an example of lines expressing structure. The rest may be omitted, unless the whole be copied, as a vignette, in sepia.

## CHAPTER II.

## DRAWING FROM THE CAST.

IT will be observed that in our opening chapter on Free-hand Drawing we have taken into consideration, and made certain allowances for, the case of a large number of people who care much for Art and Nature, but who have begun their study of Art, so to speak, in the middle. They are a specially numerous, and indeed important body in our own country, and they have arisen with the rise of the modern English school of landscape, and with that great feeling for the beauty of inanimate nature which finds its text-book and manifesto in the earlier works of Mr. Ruskin. No one can doubt as to the effect of such a comment on Turner's interpretation of Nature as these works contain. A demand at once arose for assistance in the study of Nature, and principally for good water-colour instruction. In this branch of Art the frequent references made by Mr. Ruskin to the works of Harding, Cox, Prout, Copley Fielding, Stanfield and others, supply the pupil with what may be called a gallery of reference for preparatory study, which will enable him to appreciate the greatest works of Turner in due time. All this is excellent, and has produced great results. But it is certain that Mr. Ruskin never

wished to confine the studies of his disciples to landscape, still less to landscape inaccurately drawn; on the contrary, we have heard the severity of his system of working complained of somewhat unreasonably. And in some of his published lectures he lays down the principle which our Art Schools follow in common with him, that all Art work and study, even in simple decoration and ornament, is based on drawing from the Human Figure. The proper study of mankind is Man, in painting as well as in poetry or philosophy: perhaps for the same reason in both—its great difficulty and absorbing interest. When the pupil has worked through a proper series of casts of other objects of inferior beauty, and can draw their lines correctly, and see and lay on their darkest and faintest shades in fine gradation, he is fit to begin drawing such casts as that of the Discobolus, which is one of our chosen models of Art-anatomy. Correct drawing of the figure is the end of Drill and the beginning of Art.

All our drill in form, then, will lead to the study of the human body. By the word 'form,' in this book, is meant not only outline or the conventional boundary of form, but more particularly that modelling of surface within the outline which expresses internal structure. This is called 'the light and shade of the particular object:' although it varies with every relative position of the object and the light in which it is seen. For however the appearance of the shadow may vary, the modifications of surface which produce it remain a constant quantity. They always cast a shadow of their own, which resembles them in form, though every change of the angle at which light falls on the

object brings fresh modifications of its surface into sight.

‘Even landscape painters,’ says Mr. Armitage, ‘would be the better for a course of real drawing.’ This sentence is one to be carefully considered by professed artists as well as amateurs. And the latter, we think, should attend to it in particular; that is to say, educated adults who wish really to take to drawing ought to think seriously whether it may not be better to begin with their course of ‘real drawing,’ and learn to go through operations methodically and correctly, and to draw simple things right in the first instance, by simple rules which will apply afterwards to difficult and complicated things. It is not easier to draw a sketch of a glen or a stream than to draw the cast of a pomegranate; yet how many persons with the painter’s instinct in them will begin with a complicated piece of scenery and reject the dull beginning. They had rather, they admit, make a futile sketch of a beautiful thing which will assist their memory, &c., than make a good drawing of an ugly thing; and it is easier too. No doubt it is. We are afraid that this position is impregnable; for it really implies thorough inattention to the subject. People can only keep in the persuasion that a ridiculous caricature of a beautiful thing is better than a good drawing of a simple thing, by deliberate neglect of mind: they will, in fact, hear no reply.

We must say to all alike, Correctness first, beauty afterwards. If you like deforming Nature first, and sentimentalising over your deformity afterwards, it is not forbidden in a free country. But you ought to



begin with steadying your hand and eye by drawing straight lines and rounding tennis-balls. If you will not; if you are already a sketcher; if real love of Nature made you one, and you have innocently begun with beauty, you have begun with pudding before meat. Still you may make a good meal if you come to the meat at last. But as at present nothing but pudding will tempt your artistic palate, a piece of Albert Durer, a woodcut of the characteristic lines of a photograph, and the photograph itself, have been prepared for you in chapter i. You are first to trace them, then to draw them in pen and ink. You may perhaps work them out tolerably; but if you cannot do them, why not begin with what you can do; as, for instance, the curves given in that chapter, or some of the easiest casts in this? If you know what Beauty is, is she not worth serving two months for? If that be all, you will find her in the casts quickly enough.

Landscape, in fact, is an excellent introduction into Art, but it is not all Art, or the highest thing in it. The great thing is that it teaches people to look at nature before anything else can, and also commits them to practice in Art by giving them the pleasure of little successes at first. Turner's first attempts, as they are now to be seen, we think, at South Kensington, are as frank rudimentary efforts at doing what he wished to do but could not do, as any ordinary sketcher's. He soon withdrew into grey, and began at the beginning, with hard-pencilled straight lines, of walls, &c.

In a future chapter on Sketching from Nature, for travellers or persons pressed for time, we shall return to the word 'amateur' and make some inquiries about it.

At present we have only to say that whatever amateur work may mean beside, it does not mean incorrect work, but incomplete work; and that work done wrong is not done at all, but only attempted in a futile manner. A problem or a sum is not done when you have multiplied and divided wrong and brought out a wrong answer; nor is one's argument completed, when one has reduced oneself *ad absurdum* by one's own statements, and ceased to argue. But Amateur, we suppose, means Lover of Beauty: and all beginners, old and young, are apt to mistake what is meant for mere training of the hand and eye for serious endeavour to express beauty. They feel it no small vexation to have to pass hours in producing a well-rounded drawing of a tennis-ball by way of training, when they want to paint some favourite scene or portrait straightway. As we have said, the pupil, as such, must put by all his feelings about beauty. They may be intense to passion, but it is 'skill' alone which 'wins grace<sup>1</sup>,' not the mere feeling of what one could do if one was skilful. No one must think at first of acquiring skill and producing beauty at the same time. So let our pupil repeat the exercises set down for him, with a good courage. The Durer-copying is, in fact, a concession to the landscape sketcher, and only granted him in the hope that, having acquired some little accuracy and real power by irregular means, he will seek to gain more by simpler and severer drawing. But for years of progress it will be highly expedient for him to go back to simple exercises from time to time, and practise plain light and shade at intervals: it will

<sup>1</sup> Kunst macht gunst.

ensure his returning to the use of colour with renewed power.

Now, drawing the human figure is generally admitted to be the central way of learning to draw, consequently we must lead our Artistic drill up to it, and, in fact, our Amateur or Landscape drill also.

Both are, in fact, preparatory courses before our pupil can, properly speaking, begin real study of art. When he has learnt the ordinary processes of drawing and the names and arrangement of bones and muscles, he has learnt as it were to set up the framework and the walls of man's house of flesh: but this is a mere preliminary to drawing it as it stands: and as study of the framework will only teach him correctness, and not distract him with beauty, it is the best training he can have. The study of the form from casts introduces him to beauty: and when he has really mastered that, we are inclined to give him further liberty in three important ways. First, when an able master will give him leave, he may proceed from the cast in chalk to the cast in brush and sepia, and then to the cast in oil-monochrome. Secondly, when he is an advanced student of human form in sepia, or with the hard-point, he may begin to try experiments in colours, always by way of exercise. Thirdly, if he has the painful gift of originality in him, he may now begin to try to use it by designs in pen-and-ink etching; inventing or choosing his own subjects. This, we apprehend, is an adaptation of the severe and excellent system of the French *ateliers*. Their method of study has this advantage over our own, that it really is a system of progressive training, capable of being adapted to almost any student's wants. Its principle is

severe labour and gradual progress, repression of crude originality, and devotion to study of scientific drawing, with continual reference from the living model to the cast, and from either to the skeleton.

*Extracts from Mr. Armitage's evidence before the R. A. Commission.*  
*Blue-book, p. 543. Ans. 5050, et sqq.*

‘Q. Do you consider the French better draughtsmen than the English (and why)?

‘A. Decidedly: from their thorough education, and the length of time which they devote to the art of drawing. In England nobody knows what drawing is; it is considered that two hours a day is quite sufficient for learning the art. What would be thought of devoting only two hours a day to the practice of music? You have to give seven or eight if you want to acquire proficiency; and the art of drawing is at least as difficult to acquire.

‘Q. What time do the students in France give to art?

‘A. In the private ateliers five hours a day, four of which are devoted to downright hard work; the remainder being spent in intervals for rest. The public school in the evening afterwards is two hours.’

‘There are two separate rooms, one for the antique, the other for the living model. On entering the school the student was set to work at once in the antique school from some cast, and the master would three times a week go among the students and correct the drawing of every individual. . . .

‘When the professor thinks the student sufficiently expert in drawing from the antique, he tells him to go into the school of the living model, where he has to draw with chalk and charcoal perhaps for another year. Some have to draw for two or three years from the life before they are allowed the use of colours. It is only when the master is fully convinced that the student is sufficiently advanced, that he allows him to take the palette and colours and begin to paint.’



French academic teaching provides also that the stronger and higher class of pupils shall not be compelled by poverty to waste time in painting pictures for sale, but be supported by Art Scholarships, so as to be kept long enough in the student state, and not leave it till they are masters of line, light-and-shade, and a certain (perhaps not very wide) range of colour. In England, a young man of promise is not only allowed, but forced, to begin to paint for money before he has half learnt to paint at all, or even to draw; and in consequence he never completes his Art-education at all; and though natural power, feeling, and sense of colour may enable him to produce original pictures, yet he is hampered in his choice of subject because he is not master of the human figure, and is not able really to aspire to serious work for want of severe study. He is often like a clever private-school boy who has not learnt his grammar—and must either fail for want of it, or pick it up by painful waste of labour.

The fact is that our Art Schools have done more than they professed to do. Their main object was at first supposed to be the production of artistic patterns for various manufactures, and the desired results were produced. Young persons were taught real drawing from Nature, and found it easy to produce pretty designs in consequence. But a number of them now feel also that there are a great many objects in Art, besides and above good designs for lace or wall-papers; and that the good training which has been given them is training for higher work as well as for lower. They want, in fact, to paint pictures. We hope the time may soon arrive when some at least of our Art-manufacture schools may

be Art Schools properly speaking; and establish regular examinations, with pass degrees and prizes, for anatomy, water-colouring, and painting. It is a question for the Universities to consider whether they may not be right in taking the initiative in this matter. The encouragement to all higher forms of Art would be incalculably great, if the leading educational bodies in this country would recognize Art as an object and means of Education.

Still the sense and desire of beauty are something: and no one perhaps is strong enough to go through the proper series of exercises without some indulgence in anticipation of the use of powers which he has yet to gain. Turner's system in his wide study of inanimate nature was to treat himself to bright local colour in the foregrounds of his sober early pictures; which were in fact saleable and priceless studies in light and shade. He coloured dead fish like opals on his beach foregrounds; he introduced rainbows into his storms; he brought in peacocks, or striped dresses, or anything which would give him the keen enjoyment of colour without doing him harm. And we think that the chief reason for using the human figure as a means of general training for all pupils who are strong enough to begin to study it, is that it gives the greatest amount of beauty of line in its severest form, and the most delicate gradations of shade in their subtlest form. Any one who has learnt accurate drawing by means of straight lines, or, as the French call it, 'drawing square,' will gladly welcome the greater difficulties and far greater interest of drawing from the cast. It is also the best means of teaching the pupil, who has hitherto de-

pended on lines for all marked form and only learnt rounding as an exercise, that there are no lines in Nature after all, and that he must express form by subtle shades. And of course as he acquires an idea of muscular form in man, he is sure to gain power of appreciating surface, and to learn to express its rise and fall by delicate shades without cutting lines. In short, he will come to understand perspective in a practical and unconscious way; and in fact a very great deal of perspective is to be learnt, for purposes of Art, by drawing the deltoid and pectoral muscles again and again.

So far for the reasons for making use of the human figure (generally speaking, and in its various details), as containing our grammar of practical Art-instruction. For our instruments of study, the young artist will probably begin by working in charcoal and chalk. We think that if he makes rapid progress in their use, which is not unlikely supposing he has been in the habit of drawing rocks or trees with care and accuracy, he may soon be promoted to the use of the brush, in water-colour first, and subsequently in oil. *Colour is out of the question* till an able and uncompromising master can be got to say he is fit to use it; and that cannot well be for months. But he may try what experiments he likes in it out of school. There are many grown pupils, we think, who will really be better able to use the brush than the crayon: and if it be so, we do not see why they should not be allowed to put on their lights and shades with the tool to which they are best accustomed; that is to say, after they have drawn their subject carefully in line, and secured

a proper framework of form to work upon. For aught we see, the water-colour brush and sepia are as good instruments of study as the crayon: and indeed in very deep-toned or large subjects they may be assisted by chalk shading. It is also remarked that many beginners find it much more difficult to see or express gradation by means of chalk lines, than to deal with it in water-colour washes. Of course it will often be convenient to work up a drawing as far as possible in pencil, and then wash it lightly with sepia. We have some difficulty in saying whether this license for the brush may not even be carried farther where a person is tolerably well skilled in form, that is to say, when he has acquired the habit of drawing correctly by putting on patches of light or of shade in definite shape;—supposing him to have gained this power (and good landscape water-colourists often have gained it), we do not in that case see why he should not study the figure by means of monochrome in oil. He must go through his course of line-drawing, till he can put the leading *lines* of a cast on his canvas correctly; then we think he may paint its *forms* in white and umber. He must not think of colour till he knows the use of the brush, and till he has also learnt subtlety in surface-light and shade.

The pupil must now be put through a course of drawing from casts of various objects, as a preparation for drawing from the human figure. We prefer his working from casts of objects in the school. At other times, we give him leave for practice in rapid sketching from any object he pleases, if it be free from polish on its surface, for reflections are sure to be too much for beginners. If he must make experiments



with colour, we recommend him to take a series of shells, or wild flowers of simple form; or a spray of not more than three leaves, or a *green* apple. He should at all events imitate one of Green's sheets of mixed tints from three colours (procurable at Rowney's, Rathbone Place), and practise Rowney's sepia lessons.

It must be remembered that it is much easier to draw a small cast than a large one; as the eye measures the relative distances with greater ease and precision. It would be a capital exercise to repeat each of the full-length casts given below, drawing them first at about eighteen inches from a small cast, then at a large size from the full size one.

[The casts here recommended are all used in our Art Schools, and are procurable at Brucciani's in Long Acre.]

- a. Cast of apple, orange, or pomegranate, to be drawn correctly in outline, by means of straight lines, and then rounded and finished in sepia or chalk.
- b. Casts of various shells: rather more complicated shades with crossing lines. Sepia or chalk.
- c. Blackberries and leaves (cast), for intricacy.
- d. Cast of arm or leg.
- e. Same *écorché*; muscles exposed. (Names to be learnt by heart.)
- f, g. Hand and foot.
- h, i. Hand and foot; muscles exposed. (Names as above.)

- j. Face of a cast<sup>1</sup>.
- k. Human skeleton from the flat (see photograph No. 1). (Bones to be learnt by heart.)
- l. Human figure from the flat; muscles exposed (to be named and learnt by heart). Photograph 2, front muscles: and woodcut of back muscles.
- m. Human figure from cast, full length: various.

#### REMARKS ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE BONES AND MUSCLES.

The photographs here given, with the diagrams belonging to them, are an attempt to illustrate artistic anatomy for the student in the simplest way. It is conceived that they will be enough, if they are studied with real care, to enable him to provide himself with correct drawings, on a large scale, of the exterior muscles of the body, of its outer form with its skin and integuments, and of its inner framework. No one can learn the living action of the bones and muscles without drawing them. Of course it is a question of great difficulty how much further study of *internal* structure is necessary for the painter: one may generally say, it is good for him to take as much as he can assimilate, and the work of Dr. Fau, edited by Mr. Knox, or, in its absence, Mr. Warren's 'Manual,' will give him all the information he can desire.

<sup>1</sup> A list of statues is given at p. 237. The *face* of one or more of them should be studied as a preliminary exercise in measuring, before the whole form is drawn. The hands and feet are drawn with correct anatomical detail in our photographs.

This is not the proper place to go into the question of how great knowledge of the internal structure of things is required of one who only seeks to represent their outward appearance. As a practical rule, the best conditions of teaching seem to be those of good studios or *ateliers* in France or this country, where the skeleton and anatomical drawings are always at hand, for continual comparison with the cast, and also with the living model. Drawing from one or the other, with continual reference to the other two, and a little advice from a good master, will leave little to desire as to technical instruction. Inventive thought and the spirit of the painter are matters either of spiritual gift or of liberal education.

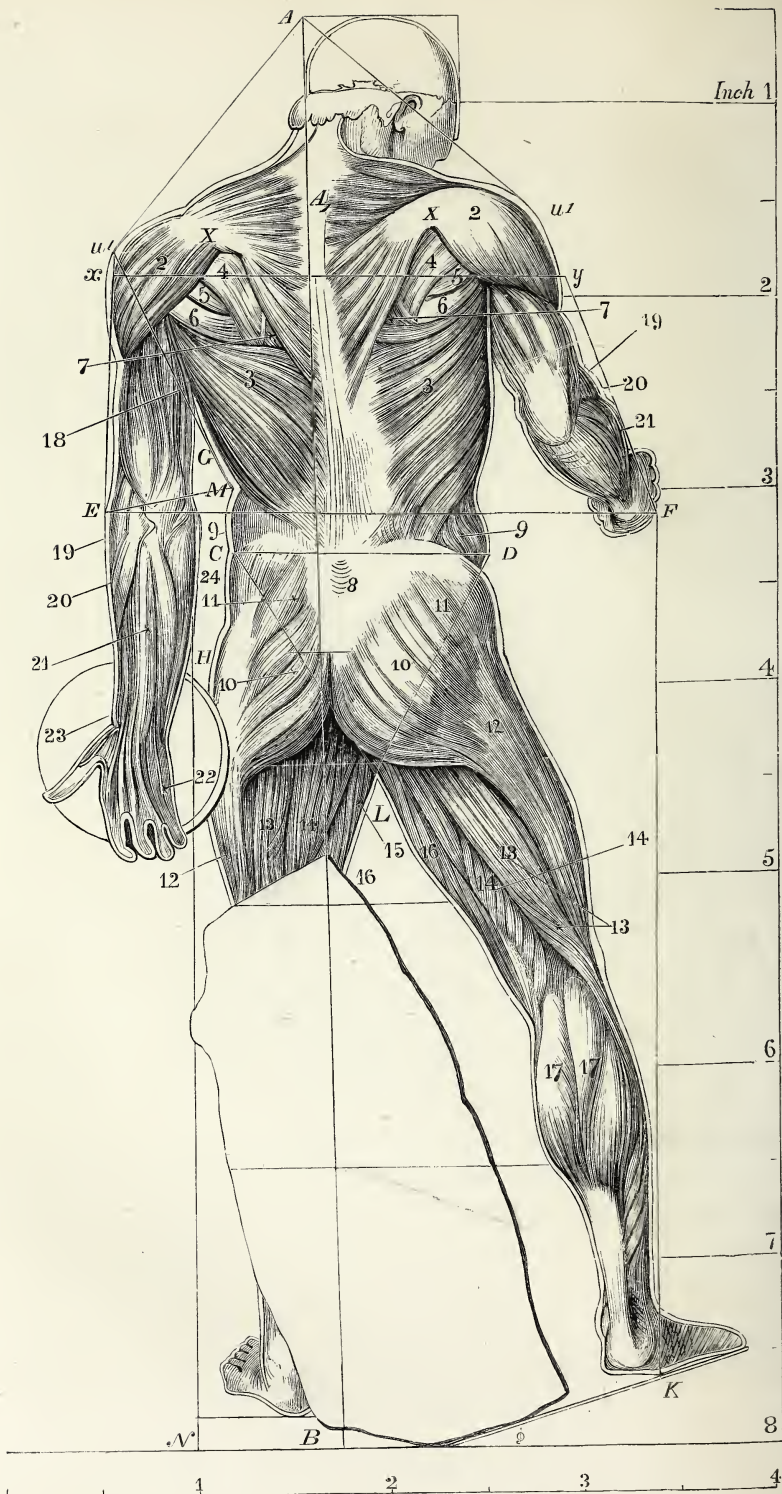
The bones and muscles may be drawn correctly on an enlarged scale by the use of the diagrams and photographs at pp. 223-225. The former are enclosed in a rectangle, which is graduated on two sides in half-inches; on the third side, the artist's way of calculating by heads is illustrated. If the pupil divides one of them into half-inch squares with a rule and pencil, he will be able to construct a rectangle divided in like manner in any proportion he pleases, and can proceed to draw first the outline of the body, and then the skeleton within it, in chalk or sepia. He can then proceed to the back muscles, which are easier; and, lastly, to the front ones. It is better that he should draw them in the flat before proceeding to the cast; but it need only be in correct outline, with just so many lines of the surface of each muscle as shall enable him to understand its working and fibrous structure. He will afterwards find it best to draw

superficial dissections of some of his copies of full-length figures, taking great pains with the varied position of the muscles and bones. If it be thought unnecessary to make him copy the figures as given in this book (and the assistance of a good master may render it so), he had better begin with drawing the back of a small cast of the Discobolus, and set up the bones and construct the muscular frame within his outline, according to the illustrations. The back muscles should be drawn first, as they are easier: a woodcut from a chalk drawing seems sufficient for them. A *small* cast is recommended at first, because it is easier to draw correctly from it than from a large one, and the Discobolus, though a very convenient and beautiful model, is not an easy one. It is apparently that of an athlete trained for the cestus<sup>1</sup>, in rather too fleshy a condition to give sharp shadow to his muscles; and consequently the lines of his back are not marked enough for easy drawing. But the following directions seem tolerably sufficient for a student who wishes to begin drawing him from the cast. (It is assumed that where the cast is used in the first instance, the student has a good book of anatomy at hand; and that he proposes to make two

<sup>1</sup> See 'Last Days of Pompeii' for the curious but probably correct statement that the pancratiasts sought to encourage the growth of flesh. Strange as this seems, it must be remembered that the cestus was so heavy and dangerous a weapon (as Lord Lytton says), that but a few exchanges probably settled every contest with it. Few 'rounds' can ever have been fought; the first home-blow on or about the head would determine all; consequently the necessity for high or fine condition would be removed. Still the Fighting Gladiator seems to prove that modern ideas of condition were conformed to in some cases.







outlines, and to draw the bones properly within one of them, and the muscles in another.)

## BACK MUSCLES.

X Spine of Scapula.

A Seven Cervical Vertebrae.

H Great Trochanter.

(Occipital on back of head omitted.)

- |   |  |                    |              |            |
|---|--|--------------------|--------------|------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Trapezoid or cucullaris.</li> <li>2. Deltoids, interlaced half-way up.</li> <li>3. Latissimus dorsi.</li> <li>4. Infra spinatus.</li> <li>5. Teres minor.</li> <li>6. Teres major.</li> <li>7. Rhomboidal.</li> <li>8. Sacro-lumbar fleshy masses.</li> <li>9. Obliquus externus.</li> <li>10. Gluteus maximus.</li> <li>11. Gluteus medius.</li> <li>12. Vastus externus.</li> <li>13. Biceps femoris.</li> <li>14. Semitendinosus.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15. Triceps or adductor femoris.</li> <li>16. Semimembranosus.</li> <li>17. Gastrocnemius.</li> <li>18. Triceps brachii {               <table border="0" style="display: inline-table; vertical-align: middle;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 0 10px;">anconeus exterior.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 0 10px;">—— interior.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 0 10px;">—— longus.</td> </tr> </table> </li> <li>19. Supinator radii longus.</li> <li>20. Radialis externus longus.</li> <li>21. Extensor common to three first fingers.</li> <li>22. Extensor of little finger.</li> <li>23. Short muscle of the thumb.</li> <li>24. Ulnar Flexors.</li> </ol> | anconeus exterior. | —— interior. | —— longus. |
| anconeus exterior.  |  |                    |              |            |
| —— interior.  |  |                    |              |            |
| —— longus.  |  |                    |              |            |

First let him mark the place at which his easel or desk stands, (having previously arranged his cast with its back towards him, as in the photograph and woodcut). Their relative positions ought not to be altered until his work is done. He will probably find it easier to work at a desk at first; but in any case all his measurements must be made from exactly the same place.

As only half the head is visible in the back view of the Discobolus, the length of some other part must be chosen as a general standard of measurement all over.

1. Hold up your pencil at arm's length and measure the cast accurately, say at CD, across the hips; then try how many times that length is contained in a perpendicular line of the height of the whole cast. That line, measured with the pencil at arm's length, *perpendicularly* down the figure, is as nearly as possible  $5\frac{1}{2}$  times

the length of the waist-line C D. In our small figure C D is exactly  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch long, and the height of the figure is  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches. It is duly scaled for enlargement. Consider your perpendicular line A B as touching the back of the athlete's skull. Then hold up your pencil or a plumb-line against the cast, and measure off two waist-lengths from the top of your perpendicular, and three from its very bottom: mark them.

2. Hold a plumb-line up again, and calculate as exactly as possible where such perpendicular from the back of the skull cuts across the waist-line of the cast: it falls just one-third across: draw your waist-line accordingly at the proper perpendicular height, just below your second waist-length from the head.

3. You have now the height of your figure, and one of its breadths. Measure across the shoulders at the widest part; it is a waist and two-thirds: draw a line of that length for the very broadest part of the shoulders, at exactly a waist from the top of the head. You will find that at that point on your perpendicular line it is just a waist to the outer edge of the right deltoid muscle above its lower point. Consequently the waist-length will be on that side and the two-thirds on the other. Draw this line, carry off the curve of the deltoids in a right line to the apex of the perpendicular line, and square the head.

4. Measure again from the left elbow to the right inner knuckle, 2 waists. Knowing the point of the left shoulder, you will easily judge the slight inclination of the line from it to the point of the elbow, and from thence to the discus. You can then draw the elbow and knuckle line, E F, at 2 waists from top of head,  $2\frac{1}{3}$  waists



in length. Next, you have one waist from  $x$ , the top of the angle of the shoulder, to the elbow at E, and it is almost exactly the same distance from the same point to the upper waist-angle at M: complete this isosceles triangle, and measure off the breadth of the arm at its base. Block out upper arm and side.

Again: from  $x$  at top of the shoulder across deltoid muscle;

= from below deltoid to armpit, separation of arm from side;

= from that to upper waist—very nearly.

Measure, with the help of one of the sides,  $x$  M of your isosceles triangle; determine points and block out. It is also an isosceles triangle on the other side from  $y$  to F, and to the intersection of the line E F with the side.

5. The plumb-line will now shew you that the right ankle-bone and knuckle are in an exactly vertical line, and the left armpit, little finger, and end of the block very nearly so. So you have the lines G H, F K.

6. It is exactly one waist perpendicular from the separation of the left arm and side at G to the discus at H, and a very little more from C at the left end of the waist-line to the separation of the thighs. In fact, calling that point L, C L D is almost exactly an equilateral triangle. This will determine your main points and distances. You will easily calculate the size of the hands, &c. by the points already known; and when these lines are secured and understood, your

work should proceed very rapidly and quite correctly. Time may be lost in correcting errors and changing one's ideas, to any extent; but careful preparation saves it.

The outer lines may at all events be drawn by themselves in the order we have given, from the diagram; they will illustrate the process of 'blocking out' tolerably well.

The object of this progressive system of exercises is, as will be seen, to enable the pupil to pick up a beginner's knowledge of anatomy while he is labouring at his hand-and-eye education. It is not likely that his attention will be distracted from the search after technical skill in drawing by merely having to know the names of the forms he draws. It is necessary to insert at least one drawing from the flat into the course—that of the human skeleton. Actual skeletons of fine form are not always accessible; and a little comparison of the drawing with the bones, when their names have been fairly well learnt, will be nearly sufficient knowledge of the ground-plan of God's image. Our series of examples, as will be seen, falls in with the course of anatomy usually pursued in Art Schools. The skeleton is drawn and the bones well learnt from the correctly imagined frame of some cast. The standing Discobolus will do as well as any other; the Antinous has also great claims. The student has next to draw the skeleton clothed with its muscles: and by the time they are properly outlined and rounded in sepia, he will be pretty well acquainted with their names. But he is not perfect in his rudimentary knowledge of muscles and bones till he can construct and draw

out without copy a tolerably correct and well-proportioned skeleton or *écorché*. And he will not have made the best artistic use of his knowledge of the frame machinery of man until he has learnt to see that it is merely an introduction to his after study from the life. One cannot be a thorough painter without anatomy; it is hardly possible to advance in any branch of Art without it<sup>1</sup>; but it is a means of study, and not an end. Anatomical correctness is no more than grammatical correctness—trifling to possess, but ruinous to be without; and beauty of drawing is like beauty of diction, or pleasure in well-doing, a kind of *ἐπιγιγνώμενον τέλος* to the work, which comes one knows not how. For there is a kind of beauty in accuracy combined with ease, even though they are combined in drawing an ugly object. It seems paradoxical to talk of a beautiful drawing of a skeleton; but, at all events, a bad copy of one is so infinitely worse a thing to look at, that the use of the term beautiful may be allowed by force of contrast; in fact, it is the *drawing* which is beautiful, or rather *excellent*, and not the bones; and we here refer, with some confidence, to our photograph from Mr. Macdonald's dissection of the Discobolus.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Joshua Reynolds's words, 'A landscape painter ought to study *anatomically* all the objects which he paints,' are used, we are glad to see, as a motto for a work already in use at South Kensington, which is now to be issued to subscribers. It is arranged by Thomas Hatton, Esq., and called 'The Anatomy of Foliage,' and consists of a series of photographs, in pairs—one of a tree in winter, the other of the same in summer. The principle is obvious, and carries out the instructions of Harding, which are invaluable for beginners.

## LIST OF BONES AND MUSCLES.

### BONES.

1. Frontal.
2. Parietal.
3. Temporal.
4. Occipital.
5. Seven cervical vertebrae.
6. Clavicle.
7. Scapula.
8. Twelve dorsal vertebrae.
9. Humerus.
10. Five lumbar vertebrae.
11. Ulna.
12. Radius.
13. Carpus.
14. Metacarpus.
15. Phalanges.
16. Pelvis.
17. Ilium.
18. Ischium.
19. Pubis.
20. Sternum.
21. Sacrum.
22. Femur.
23. Trochanters.
24. Patella.
25. Tibia.
26. Fibula.
27. Tarsus.
28. Metatarsus.
29. Phalanges.
30. End of fibula.
31. Malleolus.
32. Five true ribs.
33. Five false ribs.

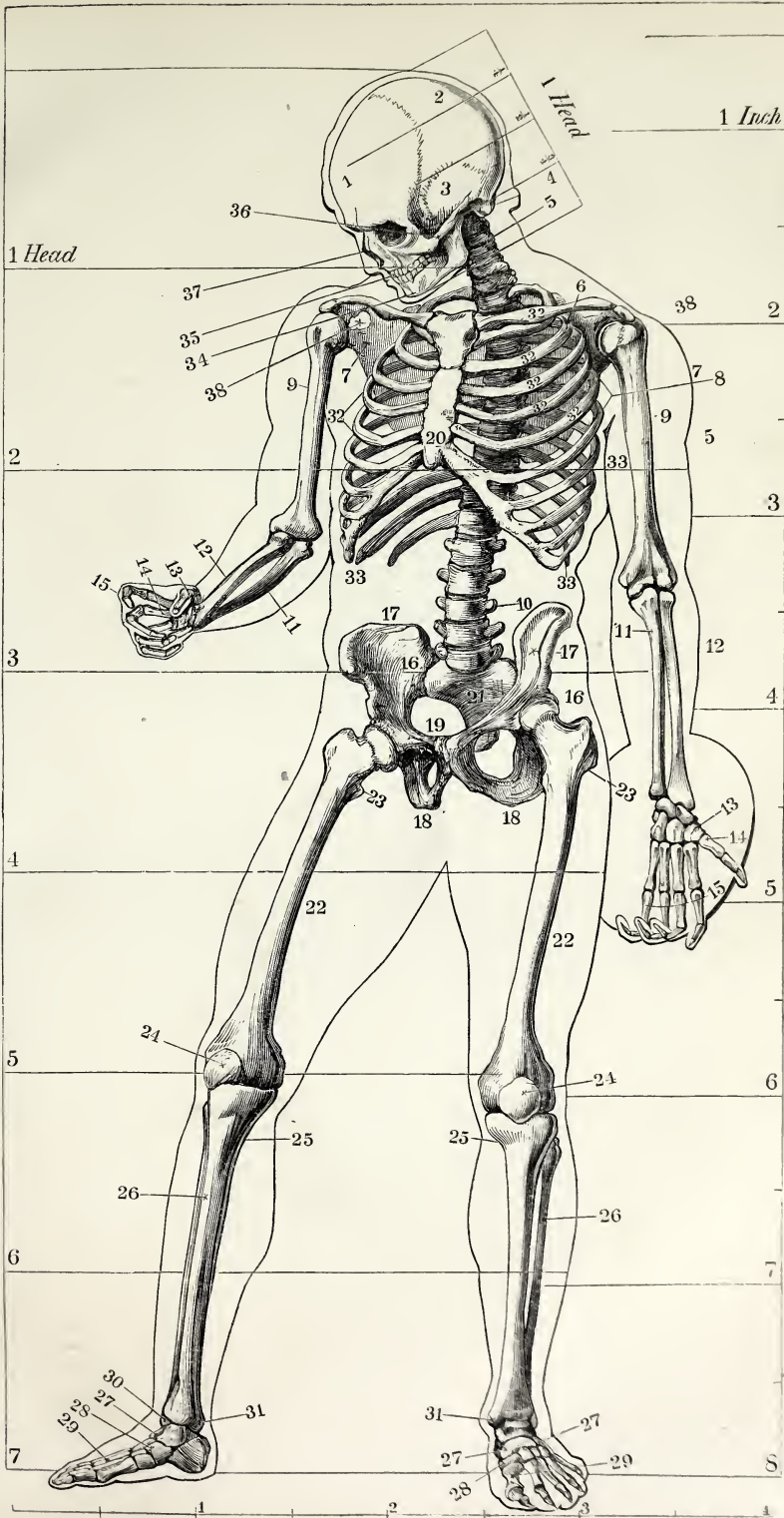
### FRONT MUSCLES.

1. Deltoid.
2. Biceps.
3. Triceps.
4. Pronator radii teres.
5. Supinator radii longus.
6. Flexor carpi radialis.
7. Palmaris longus.
8. Flexor carpi ulnaris.
9. Pectoralis major.
10. Obliquus descendens.
11. Cucullaris (trapezius).
12. Sterno mastoideus.
13. Sterno hyoideus.
14. Serratus major.
15. Rectus abdominis.
16. Frontalis.
17. Temporalis.
18. Iliacus.
19. Adductor longus (triceps).
20. Pectinalis.
21. Biceps femoris.
22. Gracilis.
23. Sartorius.
24. Rectus femoris.
25. Vastus internus.
26. Tensor vaginae femoris.
27. Vastus externus.
28. Tibialis anticus.
29. Gastrocnemius.

















Inch 1

0

1 Head

2

3

4

5

6

7

2

3

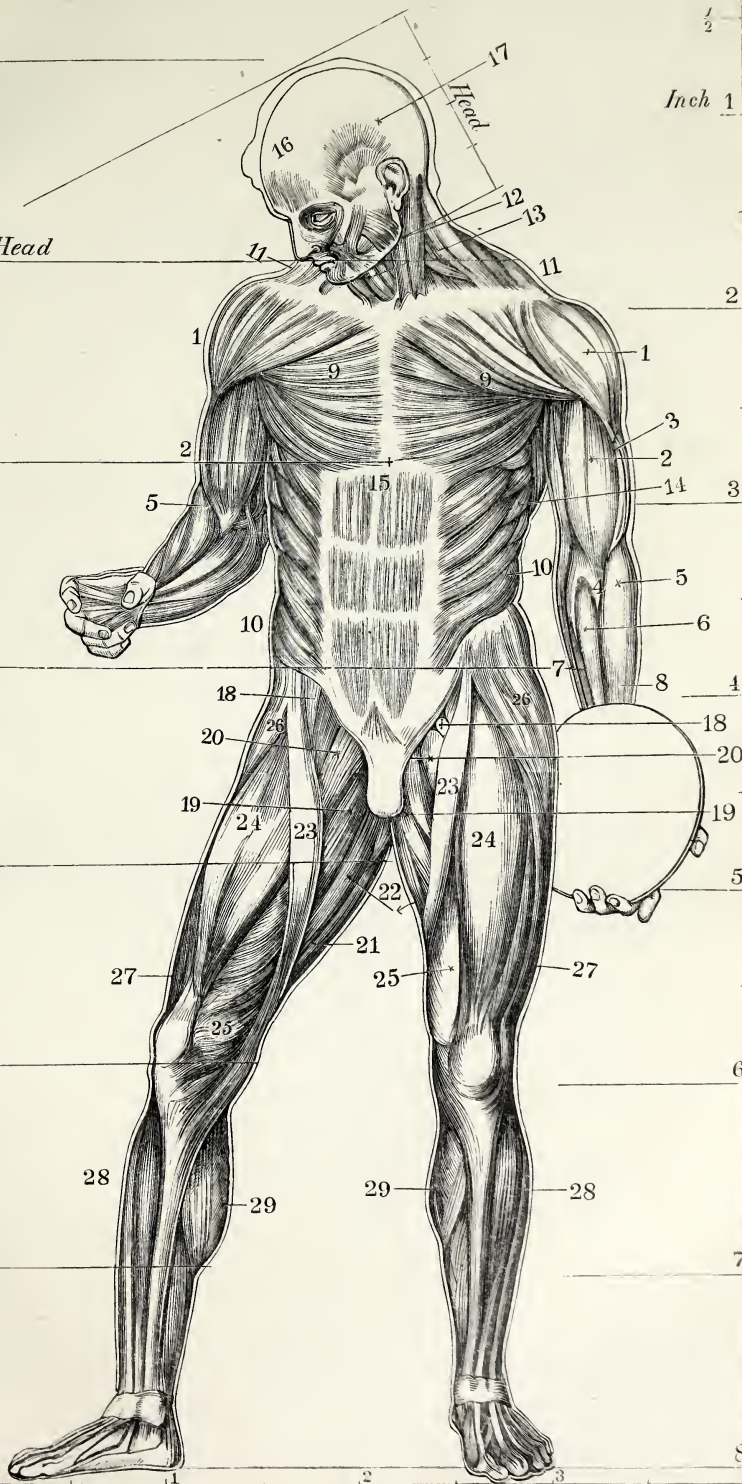
4

5

6

7

8







Drawings from the cast should, as a rule, be made of the full size of the cast. This is impossible in most whole-length studies, but should be complied with in other cases. The pupil should have every advantage given him in arrangement of lateral light above his work, comfortable desks and easels, and good materials, and everything should be done to enable him to concentrate his attention on mathematical accuracy of proportion, between the distances and comparative sizes of parts, in his model and his drawing.

Almost all draughtsmen vary their method of calculating distances in copying a statue. We have already attempted an analysis of the process, but repeat it for the front of the figure, measuring by heads. The Discobolus shall be the chosen model; and charcoal the material, until our outline is absolutely mastered.

1. Mark the exact distance at which you sit from your copy, noting the difference between your view of it when you sit up and when you lean back. If possible, make a chalk mark for your chair, easel, and model.

2. Draw a perpendicular line of the height you mean your drawing to be, and a horizontal one across it at top where you mean to begin: also at its lower end. This will be the height of your copy.

3. Hold up your pencil at arm's length against the cast, measuring with your thumb the distance from the top of the hair to the point of the chin. That is what artists call a head, and there are eight heads in the average male figure. The Discobolus, like many other athletic statues, is shorter in proportion; only just

seven<sup>1</sup>. A head is a face and one-fifth, so that there

<sup>1</sup> We prefer Sir Joshua Reynolds's reckoning by faces, which we insert here.

#### LENGTHS.

The ancients commonly allowed 8 heads to their figures, or 7 for short herculean proportions; we ordinarily divide the figure into 10 faces.

	Faces.
Crown to forehead .. .. .	$0\frac{1}{3}$
From lowest hairs on forehead to bottom of chin .. ..	1
(Forehead, $\frac{1}{3}$ face; nose, $\frac{1}{3}$ face; mouth and chin, $\frac{1}{3}$ face.)	
Chin to pit between collar-bones .. .. .	$0\frac{2}{3}$
Pit of collar-bone to end of sternum .. .. .	1
To navel 1 face, to ischium 1 face .. .. .	2
To upper part of knee .. .. .	2
Knee .. .. .	$0\frac{1}{2}$
Lower knee to ankle .. .. .	2
To sole of foot .. .. .	$0\frac{1}{2}$
	<hr/>
	10

(The face, it will be seen, is equally divided by a line drawn across through the eyes.)

	Faces.
Humerus = 2 faces from shoulder to elbow .. .. .	2
Elbow to root of little finger .. .. .	2
	<hr/>
	4

#### BREADTHS, &c. (APPROXIMATELY.)

A man with arms outstretched is as broad as he is long, from point of longest finger on right hand to point of longest finger on left hand.

	Faces.
From pit of collar-bones to shoulder, 1 face each way ..	2
From shoulder each way, about $\frac{1}{4}$ face .. .. .	$0\frac{1}{2}$
(This may do for male or female.)	
Waist .. .. .	$1\frac{1}{2}$
Hips .. .. .	2
Knee, about .. .. .	$0\frac{1}{3}$

If lines be drawn from the points of a woman's breasts to the pit between the collar-bones, they form an equilateral triangle.

The chest is one face deep from the pit of its collar-bones to the 'box' of its shoulder-blades.

The sole of the foot is  $\frac{1}{6}$  of the figure, and the thumb = 1 nose ( $\frac{1}{3}$  face).

Middle of arm to beginning of head, 5 noses.

will be no difficulty in reducing this measurement to that in the note.

BY HEADS.

Chin to sternum, 1;—to navel, 2; to ischium, 3; to knee, 5; to sole, 7:  $7 + 1 = 8$ .

Top of hair to forehead = roots of hair to centre of eye = thence to meeting of teeth = thence to chin; each  $\frac{1}{4}$  head.

4. Having got the length of the head with your pencil, measure the cast by it accurately, and see how many times the head-length is contained in the length of the body. Be careful to make the pencil descend exactly in the same straight line in measuring. Divide your perpendicular line accordingly on your paper; you have then the proper height of your drawing, correctly divided into its eight parts. That is to say, you know *at what height* the chin, the sternum, the navel, the ischium, the knee, and the small of the leg above the ankle of your copy ought to be.

5. Hold up a plumb-line from the chin (or along the frontal line) of the cast, and mark on your paper where it runs along the body to the feet; this should give you the pose of the figure, and enable you to mark the *horizontal* position of the above parts.

6. You have now the necessary lengths to guide you in your drawing; and may proceed to hold up your pencil once more at arm's length, to ascertain the breadths, or you may measure from the pit between the collar-bones (a most important point to start from in all figure drawing) to the point of each shoulder. The usual breadths of various parts of the body are annexed. They may be committed to memory, but

are best learnt practically ; or rather they are not learnt till the student is beyond reach of mistake in applying them.

BREADTHS IN HEADS (FROM APOLLO BELVIDERE).

Shoulders, 2 heads, across middle of deltoid muscles.

Waist, at narrowest,  $1\frac{1}{3}$  head.

Hips, at fork of thighs,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  head.

Arms,  $\frac{1}{2}$  head.

The *head* of the Apollo does not include the top-knot of hair.

7. You have now secured your 'distances' or proportions with some correctness. You must proceed to block out your figure in straight lines, not attempting to imitate its curves. Treat it as you have treated any simple cast which has been put before you, and enclose it with straight lines, verifying them at convenient points, by holding up the pencil to the cast, and making distance A : B in cast equal to corresponding distance  $a : b$  in your copy.

The measurement we have given by heads and faces is generally used, and has therefore been adopted. Yet on measuring casts of the great antique statues it will be found that eight heads is decidedly too large an allowance for the standard comparative height of a man. Almost all students will be surprised, on measurement, at the large size of the heads of statues which give the idea of delicate smallness by their finely-formed crania. This impression is probably derived also from their exquisite throat-poise, breadth of shoulder, and set of collar-bone.

It seems that the standard of eight heads has been assumed from the Apollo Belvidere. By allowing rather



largely for the κρώβυλος of hair, and measuring down to the toe of the advanced foot, one can make that number of him. We add our measurement in heads of a few other well-known statues, from casts or photographs.

					Heads.
Venus of Milo	...	...	...	...	7½
Venus (Townley)	...	...	...	...	nearly 8
Discobolus (standing)	...	...	...	...	7
Antinous	...	...	...	...	7½
Germanicus	...	...	...	...	8
The 'little Apollo' (Sauroctonos—wonderfully light, graceful, and agile)	...	...	...	...	6⅔ (!)
Faun of Praxiteles	...	...	...	...	7⅓

Nothing but continued practice will give the faculties of correct calculation of distances in drawing outline and of subtle gradation in light and shade. But when they are once gained they can hardly be lost, and they will between them enable any person to draw anything which may be set before him. They are as valuable in landscape sketching as in studio copying, and proper use of them makes the difference between good work and failure, truth and falsehood.

When your charcoal outline is complete and correct, draw it firmly in with chalk, if you propose to make a chalk drawing, or oil study; with a hard pencil if you mean to use sepia or water-colour. You should then have lines representing all the limits of your Discobolus correctly, and also lines representing the direction, through their centre or darkest part, of the shades on the body which indicate the projections of the muscles, and the depressions which generally indicate bones, at least in the trunk. If you are

going to use sepia, these latter lines, drawn through and so representing the deepest shade, must be erased before the water-colour shade is put on. It may be well to make a sketch in charcoal only, roughly but correctly imitating the shadows you have to copy by rubbing the charcoal in with your finger to the form; then to transfer its outline to your paper, and to keep it beside you while you are repeating its shades in sepia.

To transfer it, you have only to cover its back with black chalk, to lay it back downwards on a sheet of paper, and to pass a hard pencil point over its outline and leading lines. When you have secured your outline and leading lines, which guide you to the principal shades, you have in a great degree obtained the form.

You have now to express by crafty gradations the right degree of projection.

The Venus of Milo may be studied for extreme grace and repose of line.

The Farnese Hercules, Atlas, or Laocöon as a map of the muscles.

The Theseus and Ilissus for strength in repose.

The Torso of the Vatican ('Michael Angelo's master'), for spring of muscle in motion.

The Antinous, Germanicus, or the athlete with the strigil, for perfection of strength.

[Of course, if the student is a young man at all given to rowing, gymnastics and the like, he will have opportunities of observing muscle in motion, which are quite invaluable. It is most important for him to store his memory with observed forms and facts, even before he can hope to be able to express them by drawing.]

When he is well able to study the human figure in water-colour or oil from the cast, he has reached a point which allows him a retrospect. He has not only a good deal of hard work to look back to, but some substantial progress, from lines to solids, and from solids to the most beautiful and difficult of all solid objects. He has reached a point of divergence in his progress. He will perhaps continue the study of the human form with a view to attempting the highest forms of Art, that is to say of recording facts which concern the history and nature of man; or in any case, he will have learnt enough accurate drawing to assist him very materially and protect him from anything like gross error, should he attempt portrait, or confine himself to landscape, genre, or still life. He has reached in one sense the end of the course of our present 'national' Art-schools; and may, if he will, enter the regular course of schools of painting. We have already given some reasons why the human figure should be the chief object of study. The principal one was its difficulty, from the extreme subtlety of its curves and roundings, and the absence of edges and outlines. The pupil will find that in drawing an arm or a leg, and especially in the more difficult study of a hand, nothing will avail him but knowledge of form without lines. And this is why it is expedient to commit the muscles to memory, and to make careful studies of them before attempting the perfect form. The bones are all outline, the muscles give you the guidance of cutting lines over the whole surface. With the first attempts at drawing from the full-length cast begin all the difficulties of drawing surfaces and foreshortenings;

and nothing but severe practice can overcome them. In all work where delicate curves are concerned, as well as in all complicated subjects, without exception, the rules of perspective are found rather negative than positive guides. They will secure one from error, especially in architectural work, where the principal lines of a subject are straight; and as the foreground of a picture comes into existence they must be carefully borne in mind. But in landscape which takes in a wide horizon, or in historical pictures of many figures and varied action, there is so much to think of besides vanishing points, and the difficulty of applying the rules of perspective is so insuperable, that a kind of tacit amnesty is allowed the artist, and if there be interest or beauty in his work, few critics are willing to search for mistakes in it; or indeed able to verify them in the complications of the subject. We cannot parse every word we use, nor can the grammar of perspective be all repeated over every tree or stone in a landscape. Yet a grammatical error is unpardonable in an educated speaker, and a careless perspective in a middle distance which offends an accurate eye, most grievously diminishes the value of the picture in which it occurs. We remember a water-colour of great beauty and value, where the principal figures stood in a hall or vestibule, with a high flight of stairs in the background, and an open door and lovely piece of garden-scene still further back, partly behind the stairs. An accurate eye instinctively began to count the steps, and compare their height with that of the door—an ordinary back door of a handsome Italian house. Reckoning each stair at 5 inches in



height, that of the door could not have been less than 35 feet; and this absurdity, once observed, could hardly be banished from the eye or the mind. The fact is, that the rules of perspective ought never to be evidently broken, and that breach of them is failure in the grammar of Art; but that in many cases it is impossible to apply them accurately enough to detect mistakes, if they exist. Wherever the artist can attend to them he is bound to do so.

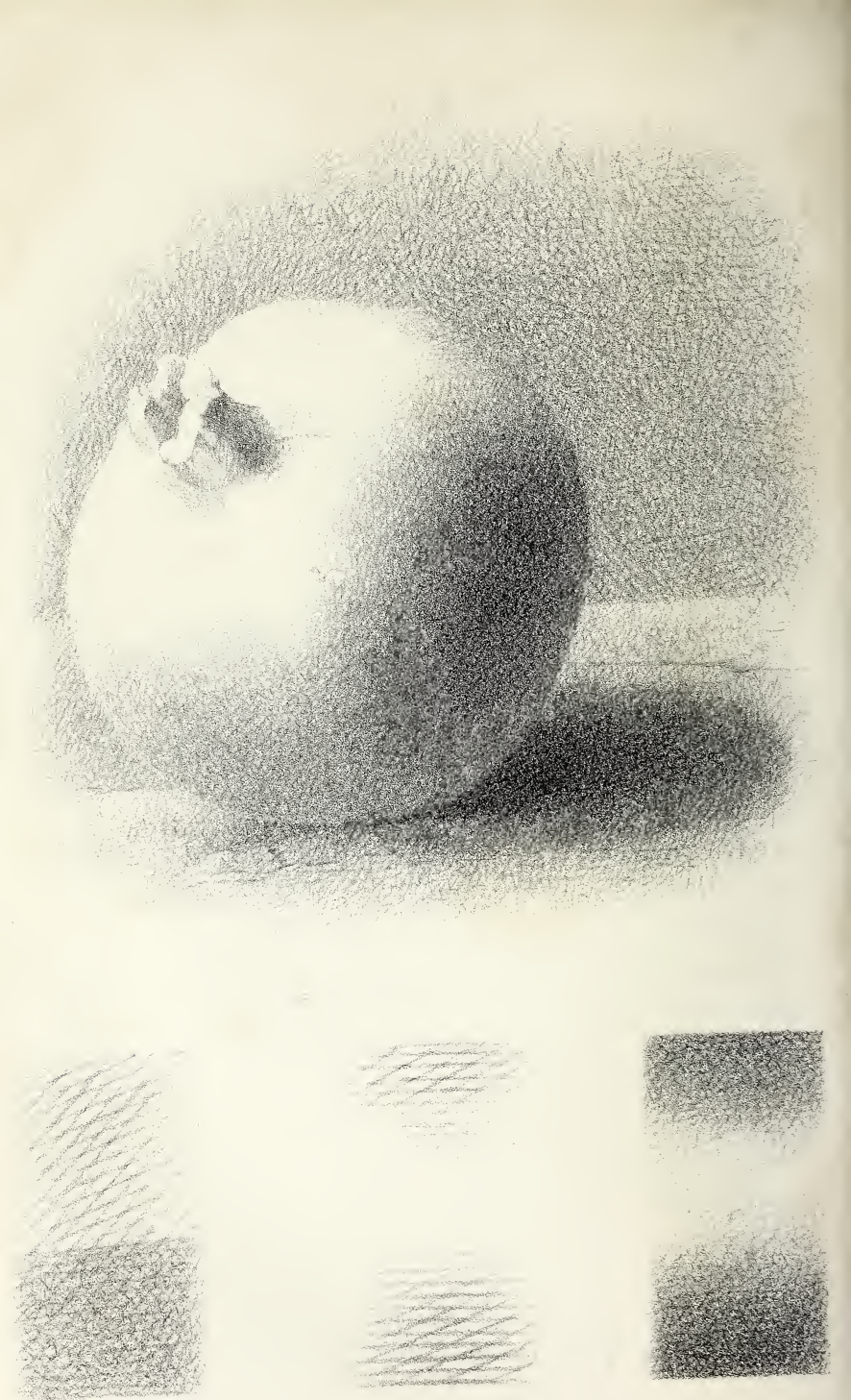
In a practical way, much perspective is learnt by care in anatomy, in the widest sense of that term. Perspective deals, as we said, with negative information. It will not teach us what hills are like, or trees, or limbs; but it will tell us what is the error in a drawing of any of them which, as we say, 'looks wrong' inexplicably. One may say, that a master of anatomy is very unlikely ever to go wrong in his perspective. Again, even in wide landscape, you should remember that clouds are wide floating surfaces, and that their shape is much more a question of perspective than you think. Again, remember that correct drawing of the solid angles of rocks will give unmistakeable solidity to your picture, and that arranging angle against angle and edge beyond edge along a hill-side will give a power of distance to a small work which cannot be got in any other way. Besides, the whole character of tree-trunks depends virtually on perspective of their muscular strength or pliancy.

We must now take up the various processes of shading.

## PRACTICE IN CHALK SHADING.

The rules for pen-and-ink shading which have been given in chapter i. apply to chalk drawing, and indeed to stippling with the brush. Water-colour drawings are now often laboriously finished in this way, and by cross-hatchings of different colours, which produce a pleasing effect when in their place. It seems more appropriate, however, to use these artifices of high finish in still-life drawings and small studies, like those of the late W. Hunt, than in the higher and wilder landscape, where character is everything. Texture, after all, ought only to be aimed at as a means of expression. Painting pictures up to exhibition-pitch is hardly work for a student. But whether we are to aim habitually at the soft play of light and shade which stippling gives us or not, it is quite necessary to be able to produce it. In colours, we shall take the subject up again at length, but a certain skill is to be learnt by chalk drawing, and still more by using the fine pencil and pen and ink. Patience and a sharp eye are necessary to success; and we put the virtue before the faculty, because patiently repeated practice, with attention, educates and quickens the eye, in almost every instance, to a wonderful extent. A little practice of the kind we have partly described and are now going on with, will be of the greatest use to a water-colour sketcher who is only accustomed to washing in sketches without really strict form. We do not ask him at once to give up his colours or his bold style, we only suggest that he had better gain a little real command of form, acute judgment in







light and shade, and ability to draw correct lines: it will not diminish his boldness, but only put reason into it.

The fact is, fine and subtle gradation in chalk is everything—though it may, we think, be learnt with the brush and sepia, and though we are not inclined to postpone their use. In the first place, draw in your outline correctly: an egg is the easiest and best object to begin with, but we choose the next step in advance—a pomegranate (see illustration)—on account of its texture. Get a really correct outline of the natural size. Then observe three things: 1. Where the high light is, or where the object is brightest. 2. Where the darkest shade on the light-coloured object (you are supposed to be drawing from a plaster cast) meets the dark projected shadow on the table where it stands. 3. The irregular line or something like a line of shadow across the object, where its roughnesses first interrupt the rays of light, or its smooth curves of form first sink away out of their reach. Mark all these lightly on your drawing. Then cover the whole space within the shadow-line with an even tint: first by straight lines one way, then by others intersecting them at a very acute angle, as in the illustration. Three or four sets of lines crossing each other, if steadily drawn, will bring the whole to a rough evenness of tint, ready for stippling. In order to draw the lines evenly, it will be best to cut the chalk to a long smooth point, to hold it long, and to draw the parallel lines rather with the side than with the point, resting your hand on the table, or, rather, sliding it along the paper at every stroke. The chalk, like charcoal and all broad and soft-

pointed tools, should be held like a foil or stick, with the thumb uppermost.

Your object is now to get a quite even flat tint all over the shadow-space of your pomegranate. You are not to attend to either roundness or texture yet; and, in fact, will be distracted and fail altogether in your work if you attempt more than one thing at a time in it. Your crossed lines are now to be stippled flat. To this end first cut your chalk to a very sharp point and fill up all the holes left between the crossed lines; either using the point itself, or, whenever it is possible, delicate lines. Next roll a piece of bread between your fingers into a sort of doughy cylinder, with a point like a pencil's; and with that remove all the dark spots and crumbs of chalk from your work. Alternate use of the chalk-point and bread-point will soon improve the look of your drawing; and you must then draw back from it, and observe carefully the lighter and darker spaces which you will still detect on it. Bring them even, with fine lines and careful filling-up of interstices; and as you proceed with the surface of your pomegranate, take up its dark projected shadow at intervals, and treat it in the same way, noticing that its extreme dark does not extend all over it, and obtaining some degree of gradation. You will at once notice the roundness and projection which this dark shadow will give your work; and enough of both will be probably attained, when the form drawn has been softened towards its lower edge, so as to melt into the shade. (In oil painting you would mix the two tints and so obtain reflected colour.) We say your drawing will now be round enough, for this reason; that it is

a common fault of beginners to try to obtain roundness, and even texture, a great deal too early in their work; and consequently to try and gradate their shadows too soon, instead of giving their whole attention at first to getting a good flat tint of shadow. This must be obtained first, according to our directions; and as soon as it is obtained the shade should be reinforced and darkened, *not* so much towards the projected shade, but nearest the light. Odd as this may sound, it is right; simply because the shadow of any object is darkest just where it first intercepts the light. We have just noticed this with the dark projected shadow—it is visibly gradated from the object which casts it. It is just the same with the roughnesses or projecting form of your pomegranate: their shadows on the white cast are strongest at their origin. So darken your shade up to the light, with full confidence that the projected shadow, and outline rounded and softened off into it, will make your drawing project ‘till it looks as if it could be taken up.’ Not that that, to a real painter, is an object; for when you get your fruit into a picture which contains more interesting objects, you want your spectator to think about them, and not about taking up pomegranates. As a single study and exercise in projection, you may of course make it as round as you can without sacrificing truths of light and shade.

You have now to take up the light side of your drawing. This for the *first time* requires you to attend to texture: for it is between the main shade and main light that texture is most noticeable; of course, because all projections in that part of the object cast

characteristic shadows of their own and display their form. Tree-trunks in light are capital examples of this. In most instances it will be best to let shade have its full prevalence over detail or texture; very slight touches with the point of the chalk will do all that can rightly be done; and if the roughness of the rind be well given at the junction of the shade and light, and delicately indicated in the light, the eye will have no difficulty in taking it for granted in the shade.

A half-tint may be scratched in in lines behind the drawing when finished: it is sometimes well to cover the whole paper with it, particularly when you are using the brush and sepia.

#### GENERAL REMARKS ON DRAWING IN LIGHT AND SHADE.

The exercises which the pupil has gone through in pen-and-ink shading will soon give him workmanlike correctness in drawing with chalk or charcoal. There is this difference in their use, that as chalk will cut to a fine point, one generally uses the point of the tool in drawing lines or filling up spaces. Charcoal ought to be cut to an edge, and rather dragged along the paper or canvas, than thrust against it. Both chalk and charcoal must be used with the whole hand, playing freely from the shoulder<sup>1</sup>. The pencil should be held like a foil or single-stick, with the thumb as its principal guide. A little practice on a black board or a wall will soon give all the necessary confidence and

<sup>1</sup> We repeat our caution to keep your eye at least two feet from your work.



accuracy. A mahl-stick should be used, but occasional practice without it is desirable. It is better to draw forms without, and fill up and lay on shade in lines with its assistance. It is of importance in drawing a round object, as, for example, an apple or an orange, to express its form with a certain economy of darkness in your shade. All the great colourists seem to have found this necessary, for fear of sacrificing the brightness or mutual relation of their tints to mere projection of form. Nothing is really gained by making a figure look as if he was walking out of the picture; he ought to look as if he was doing or suffering something in the picture, and not out of it. We here consider smaller objects, as fruit, &c., in the light of preparatory exercises for more important works. We begin of course by learning to make our apple look round; and we advance to making it look round as an apple looks, that is to say, we advance to representing it at its proper pitch of colour as an object reflecting light, and also in proper relation to other objects in a picture. The fact is, that fine gradation in light and shade suggests colour, whereas over-expenditure of darkness suggests charcoal only. The perfection of sepia drawing is that the spectator shall forget the unpleasant brown-grey of the sepia, and look on the work as simple light and shade. Now, crafty and gradual progress from light to shade will make this possible for him, and will accordingly be a good test of the excellence of the work. The following extracts from 'Modern Painters,' vol. iv. pt. iii., will explain this in some measure. The whole chapter ought to be carefully studied, but an analysis of part of it seems expedient here.

It begins by making the reader understand the difference between whiteness and brightness, or actual reflected light. The highest light in a picture is white paint or paper *in shade*; for no picture can be properly seen with the sun's light shining upon it. Now if a piece of the whitest paper be held upright near a window whose light (not sunshine) falls sideways upon it, it is in the fullest light in which it can possibly be seen when it has a picture painted on it; and being in the fullest light it is as white as possible. Yet if it be held out of window against clear sky, it at once appears and is much darker than the blue sky, and infinitely darker than bright clouds, which are white against that blue. This shews the smallness of the range of the lights and darks which can be used in painting, and the comparative whiteness of white paper and illuminated cloud is calculated at about 10 and 40; the azure light of clear sky being represented by about 20. The various systems by which the greatest amount of truth in light shade and colour has been obtained with such inadequate means are then classified and explained as follows:—‘Suppose the utmost light you wish to imitate be that of serene feebly-lighted clouds in ordinary sky: not sun or stars, which it is impossible deceptively to imitate in painting by any artifice. Then, suppose the degrees of shadow between those clouds and Nature's utmost darkness accurately measured, and divided into 100 degrees, darkness being zero. Next we measure our own scale, calling our utmost possible black zero<sup>1</sup>; and we shall be able to

<sup>1</sup> Even here we shall be defeated by Nature, her utmost darkness being deeper than ours. See Part II. sect. ii. ch. i. § 4-7, &c.

keep parallel with Nature, perhaps up as far as her 40 degrees; all above that being whiter than our white paper. Well, with our power of contrast between zero and 40, we have to imitate her contrasts between zero and 100. Now if we want true contrasts, we can first set our 40 to represent her 100, our 20 for her 80, and our zero for her 60: everything below her 60 being lost in blackness. This is, with certain modifications, Rembrandt's system. Or, secondly, we can put zero for her zero, 20 for her 20, and 40 for her 40; everything above 40 being lost in *whiteness*. This is, with certain modifications, Paul Veronese's system. Or, finally, we can put our zero for her zero, and our 40 for her 100, our 20 for her 50, our 30 for her 75, and our 10 for her 25; proportioning our intermediate contrasts accordingly. This is, with certain modifications, Turner's system; the modifications in each case being the adoption, to a certain extent, of either of the other systems. Thus, Turner inclines to Paul Veronese; liking, as far as possible, to get his hues perfectly true up to a certain point; that is to say, to let his zero stand for Nature's zero, and his 10 for her 10, and his 20 for her 20; and then to expand towards the light by quick but cunning steps, putting 27 for 50, 30 for 70, and reserving some force still for the last 90 to 100. So Rembrandt modifies his system on the other side, putting his 40 for 100, his 30 for 90, his 20 for 80; then going subtly downwards, 10 for 50, 5 for 30—nearly everything between 30 and zero being lost in gloom, yet still so as to reserve his zero for zero. The systems expressed in tabular form will stand thus:—

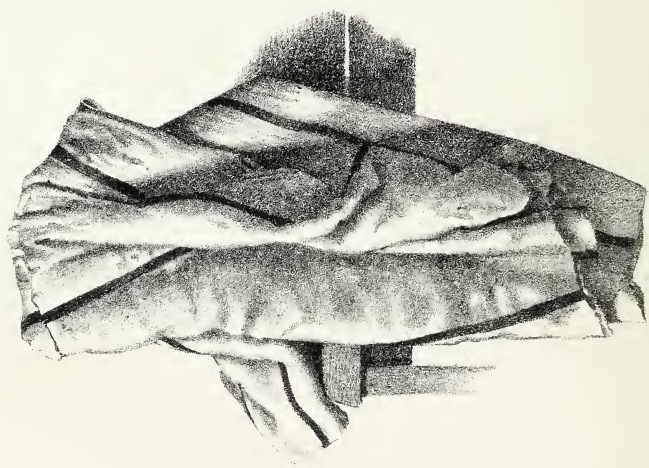
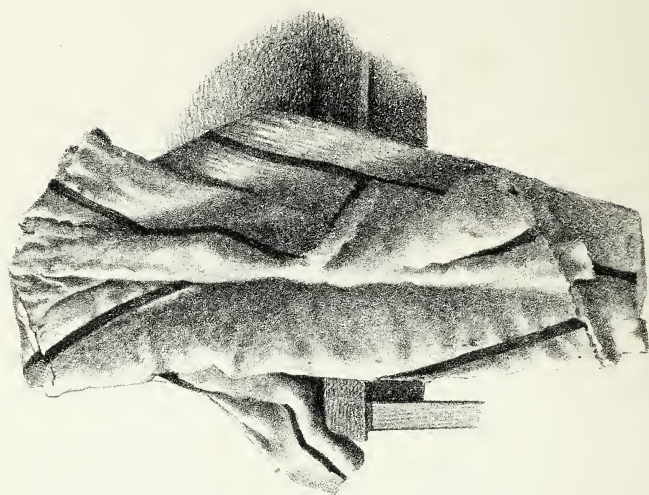
Nature.	Rembrandt.	Turner.	Veronese.
0	0	0	0
10	1	10	10
20	3	20	20
30	5	24	30
40	7	26	32
50	10	27	34
60	13	28	36
70	17	30	37
80	20	32	38
90	30	36	39
100	40	40	40

It is clear that, on Rembrandt's system, while the *contrasts* are not more right than on Veronese's, the *colours* are all wrong from beginning to end. With Turner and Veronese, Nature's 10 is their 10, and Nature's 20 their 20, enabling them to give pure truth of colour up to a certain point. But with Rembrandt, *not one colour* is absolutely true, from one side of the scale to the other; only the contrasts are true at the top of the scale. Of course, this supposes Rembrandt's system applied to a subject which shall try it to the utmost, such as landscape. He generally chose subjects in which the real colours were very nearly imitable—as portraits or figures with dark backgrounds, in which Nature's highest light was little above his own: her 40 being then truly represented by his 40, his picture became nearly an absolute truth. But his system is only right when applied to such subjects; clearly, when we have the full scale of natural light to deal with, Turner's and Veronese's convey the greatest sum of truth.'

The annexed drawings of the same piece of drapery illustrate this quotation sufficiently well; the darker one is on the Rembrandt principle, the lighter one on Turner's.







In the first, the highest light is white, and the darkest parts of the white Arab 'abba' represented are brought down correctly to black. This is the system pursued by Leonardo da Vinci as well as Rembrandt. The other drawing is on Turner's system: the high light is distinct enough, but shade is economized, and the darkest parts of the shade are kept pale. It will be seen that the former method is excellent for study of parts, or single objects in light and shade only, with a view to obtaining as much form as possible; but that it is distinctly inferior to Turner's, in which the form modelled in light and shade is considered as prepared to receive colour, and to form part of a regular picture. One dwells entirely on the fact that the folds are round, the other also on the fact that they are white and yellowish, with a black pattern meandering about them; and it seems that the first loses more in turning white into black, after all, than the other loses by want of emphasis on the shades. What has been said already of the importance of getting a flat surface of shade in drawing a rounded object like a lemon or pomegranate, is quite in accordance with this; and so are the remarks about reinforcing the shade near to the light, since the darkest shade on the surface of an object will always be thrown by those irregularities of the surface which first meet the light. The shadow cast *by the whole object itself* on the plane on which it rests is of course more dark and solid<sup>1</sup>. It is a different matter altogether, as has been said, either from the

<sup>1</sup> This of course depends on the colour of the plane. If the object itself be much darker in colour than the surface on which its shadow falls, the cast shadow will be lighter than that shadow.

natural light and shade belonging to the structure of the object, or again from accidental shadows cast upon it by other things. In our Discobolus, for example, the shadows which give roundness to the muscles, and those on the left sides of all the limbs, are the natural light and shade of the figure; the discus would cast a shadow upon the figure if the light were the other way; and if it were part of a picture involving sunlight, the figure itself would cast a long shadow to the right, which would be distinct from the other two.

The Rafael and Michael Angelo drawings in the Gallery at Oxford are wonderfully instructive as to the completeness of form which may be obtained by subtlety of gradation without violence of gradation. Whole groups are drawn in perfect roundness and relief, in which the scale of darkness begins with dim white, and does not sink below a grey half-tint.

As has been said, we are in favour of our pupil's being allowed to use the brush, instead of the crayon, in his light and shade studies, as soon as he can appreciate the greater power and subtlety it will give him. It will be for a master to judge of the proper time; we think it should come as early as possible, because it is with the water-colour brush in particular that the habit of drawing forms with both edges of the tool is learnt, as well as that of giving every touch its planned and considered shape. We must return to this subject hereafter.



## CHAPTER III.

## USE OF WATER-COLOURS.—INTRODUCTORY.

IT is hardly necessary, for the purposes of this book, to speak of the comparative importance of water-colour drawing and of oil-painting. Both vehicles have advantages of their own; but it cannot be disputed that the balance of power inclines in favour of the latter, so that a master of oil-painting can do more, and in a more forcible way, than a man who is his equal in power, and who uses water-colour alone. Still, some of the most thoughtful and beautiful works in modern Art are in water-colour: and that not only in pure or mixed landscape, as in Turner's Goldau and S. Gothard—but in poetical or historical figure-subject of the highest aim. It would not be easy to find pictures of greater power of thought and poetry than Mr. Burne Jones's S. Dorothy; The Winepress, and The Mill, by Mr. Spencer Stanhope; or than Mr. Lewis's Sinai. Yet the last-named painter repeated his great work in oil; and though few, perhaps, of its spectators preferred the second edition on canvas to the first on paper, it had the advantage of undoubted permanency, which is certainly in favour of oils. At the same time, care and good air-tight frames and protection from bright light will preserve the most delicate water-colour for an indefinite time; and a water-colourist

has a right to expect that his works will be tenderly handled. Pictures are not set up like iron targets, to stand the utmost amount of battering. It may, perhaps, be questioned whether oil-paintings are not subject to special perils by cleaning and restoration. But, however this may be, the practice of water-colour first claims our attention in this book, as an easier means of teaching or of self-instruction than that of oils.

When you have gained a certain proficiency in drawing from the cast and in the studio, you have to proceed to work from Nature. That is to say, you will either go into the life-school, and pursue its various studies of the human form, draped or undraped, or you will begin with landscape: or take up a course of studies of coloured objects at home, to acquire knowledge and power in near and local colour. If you really mean to make all possible progress, you certainly must not relinquish the study of the human form. But in so small a work as this, you must be treated for the present as a fairly disciplined draughtsman, educated up to landscape point; capable of making a workmanlike sketch or drawing in sepia, and of putting fairly well-drawn figures into it when you think fit. The subject of sketching from Nature is taken up further on. A little copying to learn a moderate scale of landscape hues will now be advisable. Of course if you have hitherto manfully adhered to the free-hand curves, and drawing from the cast, and to that only, a few copies in sepia from the '*Liber Studiorum*,' or from photographs, will now be necessary. Mountain photographs are always to be had: choose, if possible, some scene you know; or take up some of Mr. Hatton's trees in sepia. The '*Liber*

Studiorum' will teach you much form and composition ; and its plates are accessible, at a reduced size, in photographs, published by Mr. Hogarth, of Mount Street. Having done one or two of these on an enlarged scale (first in bold ink outlines, then in sepia light and shade), take up one of Rowney's three-colour lessons in landscape, which will give you a certain scale of greys, greens, and yellows. You ought not to be confused with too many 'pigments'—(the use of this truly disgusting term is compulsory)—but you ought to be allowed any greys or yellows you fancy, always remembering not to indulge in too much rose-madder, so as to make the greys too purple in your distances, as young landscapists always do, if they can. Suppose, then, you add the following colours to Rowney's three (i.e. raw sienna, indigo, and sepia) :—

Brown madder,	excellent with cobalt, in distance, for cloud, or calm shades, mountains, &c.
„	in middle distance, with raw sienna, and cobalt or indigo, for yellow and green greys.
„	very powerful in foreground for sharp points of shade : with Vandyke brown.
Cobalt,	excellent in almost all mixtures : too raw for skies, unless mixed with white or a little yellow ochre.
Light red,	all storm-greys contain it, mixed with cobalt or black, or both.
Burnt sienna,	rich yellow-brown, autumnal or warm greens, with gamboge and a little Prussian blue.

Rose madder, pure greys and purples, with cobalt.  
Gamboge, transparent yellows and emerald green.  
Yellow ochre, semi-transparent yellows (and with  
emerald green for spring foliage).

These, with black and Vandyke brown, lake to deepen browns and purples and for *force*, and Chinese white to mix in distance-blues, will do very well to begin with. Emerald green requires special care, as it is charming when well kept down, and thoroughly agonizing when abused. But spring greens are not to be obtained without it. I am personally very partial to yellow and scarlet madder, but they can be dispensed with. You should use a colour if you really like it, but still with moderation.

If you like to begin colour with a series of shells, or of wild flowers, it is perhaps the best thing you can do. A judicious master will direct you in the matter; or your decision may depend on the time of year. You cannot well go out for real open-air drawing in winter, late autumn, or early spring, at least not systematically. In summer, you had better begin to make water-colours while the sun shines, out of doors.

And before you begin to lay colours on, pay attention to the following remarks on them, which, if remembered and carried out, will have more effect on your progress in Art than you can at present think possible.



## THEORY OF WATER-COLOURS.

When pigments are spread upon a surface, their effect of colour and impression on the eye are produced in one of two ways, according to the mechanical nature of the substance of the pigment. It is either opaque and solid, or it is transparent. In the former case, the light which falls on the paper, or part of it, is reflected from the surface of the colour laid on, not at all from that of the paper: the light does not reach the paper through the solid surface of colour any more than through a plate of metal. The colour shines for itself, and has a fixed place in the scale of light and dark; nor can you darken it by increasing its quantity, but only by mixing it with some darker hue. It is, on the paper, either lighter or darker than its surroundings, and will not be made any darker by more of it being put on. This is what is meant by body-colour.

In the use of transparent colours, a thin film or layer of colour is interposed between the white surface and the eye: and the colour we see is the result produced by white light passing through this film or coat. The effect is of the same nature as that which would be produced by laying a very thin plate of stained glass on the white surface. Then, if another plate of glass were laid over the first, the strength of the colour would be increased, but it would also be made darker in pitch of shade; and if this were continued, the colour would first reach its maximum of intensity as regards hue<sup>1</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> The word 'hue' always refers to variation of colour; the word 'tint' to variation in depth of shade. There are many different tints in a sepia drawing, but no hues.

and would afterwards grow darker and darker in shade. For the light would have to pass twice through the successive layers of colour; first to reach the white paper, then back to the eye to produce on it the effect of the white paper *plus* the colour spread upon it. This is the difference between transparent and body-colour, turning on the effect of surface through the colour. Of course washes of colour are not exactly like plates of stained glass: in the first place, any number of the latter may be laid one over the other, while it is impossible to lay on more than a certain number of coats of colour without disturbing the under surface; in the second, the colour comes thoroughly into contact with the paper, and is incorporated with it; so that owing to the texture of the paper, which as it were backs the colour closely up, a certain amount of white light is reflected back to the eye from the hue without reaching the paper (as if the hue had been opaque). This white light necessarily makes the colour appear less pure. Again, very few pigments are completely transparent; and, in practice, opaque colours are often put on in thin washes to produce certain effects, the peculiarity of which depends on the greater or smaller quantity of white light reflected from their surfaces, when they have been laid on the paper.

Painting in fresco and tempera, as at present practised, is necessarily body-colour work. It is stated by Mr. Crowe that Masaccio used many warm transparent glazings in the frescoes of the Carmine. They seem, however, to have been swept smoothly on, over designs already modelled in solid light and shade to great completeness: and he is said, again, to have put

his high lights upon them in body-colour, as in oil-painting. However it may be, oil-painting combines both solid and transparent work; while water-colour, as we understand it here, is essentially work done with transparent colours. It is not that body-colour is excluded, but the principle of operation;—at least by far the best principle for those who are entering on the very considerable difficulties of the work seems to be as follows. You start with a completely white surface reflecting a certain amount of light and no more. That amount of light and no more is all you can have for your picture; at present it is a blank of high light. So you proceed to obscure it in certain parts by laying on washes of colour, and to carve your picture out, working from light to dark. The lightest green goes on the trees first, then they are rounded and modelled with darker tints; and so with the stone-greys or browns. Throughout you use the white of the paper for light, and lay on colour in others, hiding the light so as to give shade, and working from light to dark, by putting on darker and darker patches in as definite forms as possible.

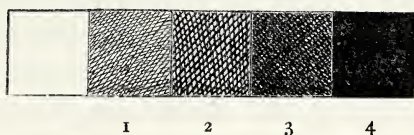
This process in its perfection implies the use of transparent colour; and it is clearly the most straightforward way of going to work, to lay on the light tints first all over, then the darker ones, one after the other, according to their degree of strength or darkness, each of them covering a less space, and leaving the lights. The edges of these coats or patches, if delicately and well shaped and rapidly put on, are one of the especial beauties of water-colour: and nothing but the mind and hand of the able workman

can give them. I should think most people who look at the frontispiece of this book will consider it a good chromograph of a very charming little water-colour. And I wish that, as an illustration of my meaning, they could see the original (by Mr. Macdonald, who is also in fact the author of these instructions in water-colour). For it must be confessed that, to an instructed eye, the chromograph is necessarily far inferior to it, for want of keen edges and sharp touches. It is richer in colour however; and any one conversant with the matter (i.e. who knows what it is to have a favourite drawing of his own rendered in chromograph by strange hands) will consider that Messrs. Day and Son have well deserved of the authors and readers of this book. Here, however, is a good place to introduce a remark which I must reiterate continually, that the great use of water-colour practice is to teach a man to put on every touch in a planned form, at least all through the constructive part of his picture. Glazings and scumblings in oil-colour are allowed of course—they are the privilege of the oil-painter. Washing down with clear water, in water-colour, is also admissible; it cannot of course take the place of drawing, but it often produces pleasant effects of texture in an easy way; and there is no harm in it any more than in the oil-scumble, unless it be used to disguise bad drawing. But washing out is not drawing in rightly, and the latter is what I want my student to attend to. And the first and last habit of the water-colour painter is to be always cutting out forms with his double-edged, or rather many-edged, brush. Use a long red cutting sable; large or small, let it be



always long haired—and hold rather by little brushes than big ones. And remember that every touch put on is as a word in a sentence, or a sentence in a speech, and that nonsense-drawing is nearly, though not quite, as bad as rhetorical verbiage. Character, vigour, and meaning of expression—these are the things which make drawing a pursuit worthy of a man. They cannot be taught him like shading or perspective; but he can teach himself to store his memory with form by continual attention to form, so that his brush always moves to express an idea, or a part of an idea;—and when he has begun to work in that way habitually, he may well hope that something will come of it.

Now the system of laying the dark tint over the light conduces especially to precision in the forms of the light portions: a matter, as we say, of the greatest importance in foreground work. Suppose you have to represent the figure here given in four washes



of colour, and to shew the separate portions as clearly as possible. Cover the whole with a wash of the strength of the tint between 1 and 2. When that is dry, lay on one a little darker from 2 to the end; a third from 3; and lastly, the darkest one at 4. By this means each portion will be clearly and distinctly marked off from the others. If the darkest shade were put on first and the three others worked

over it, it would run over the edge into the next space, destroying the evenness of the tint and the clearness of the line of separation. There is not the same danger where the lighter tints come first: the only effect of the successive washes may be to make the boundary lines a little softer. This is often desirable; and the method is followed in cases to be hereafter referred to.

As the sky and distance are generally the lightest part of the work, it will be best in general to begin with them. I must here refer to p. 248 for the reasons of the next remark which is to be made, namely, that all clear skies must be in some degree conventionalized, because we have not, like Nature, unlimited command of brightness of light and depth of shade. If you were to try to preserve the apparent relations between the light and dark of clouds and clear sky among themselves, and then to go on with the proper contrasts in shade between the sky and the rest of the landscape, and the various parts of the landscape with each other, you would find yourself reduced to the blackness of darkness before you had got the shades even of the lightest part of the picture. So the darker parts of the cloud must be kept as light as is possible consistently with a fair amount of cloud-form. You will see at the very beginning how much roundness, relief, and definite shape can be given by delicacy of gradation, using almost no intensity of shadow, i.e. no strength of colour representing shadow. And here, as elsewhere, the landscape artist who has submitted to proper training will feel the advantages of knowing the grammar of Art, and possessing a practical knowledge of gradation.

It is a common practice to paint sky and clouds in colour rather stronger than you intend them to appear, and then to remove a portion of the colour, after it is thoroughly dry, by washing it with clean water. If this is successfully done, that is to say, if an equal proportion of colour is removed, over the whole work, the effect is to make the whole sky lighter, without losing the clearness and distinctness of the forms of cloud and shadow. Some artists even use powdered pumice-stone with the same view: and in either way, a 'quality' is often obtained which is valuable in skies and distances. A granulated effect is produced by the colour being partly removed from the upper surface of the paper: for all paper used for large-size works in water-colour has a more or less rough texture of surface, which is called its grain. When a tint of colour has been laid on, well dried, and then washed with a large flat brush or sponge, a portion of colour is removed from the little projections of the paper, while all remains nearly untouched in its hollows. Consequently, instead of a thin coat of perfectly even colour, you have a tint spread over the paper which is composed of numberless small spots of lighter or darker colour, so close together and so uniform in shade as to give the same effect of evenness, with variety of delicate light, which is produced by fine stippling. This tint expresses distance better than a perfectly even coat on a smooth surface. Even the roughness of the paper, without washing, will produce this effect in some degree; as the depressions of the surface give minute points of shade and its projections of light: so that the

flat tint is broken and distance obtained. The question of using rough or smooth paper requires a little notice here. Rough paper is like any other *rather* good thing, it is easy to abuse it and make it harmful instead of useful. As we have said, there is a reason, and a good one, for using moderately rough paper, for painting in one's clouds and skies firmly, and then for washing them down to obtain air and delicacy. But you must draw your clouds and skies first, or gradate your flat sky if there be no clouds. And where you are using sunset colours, I cannot think washing advisable, because however clean your water may be, it must take away the purity of the pinks and yellows as first laid on, if they are washed over along with the blues and purples. The blues or purples must always be laid on first, and the yellows over them. Setting this aside, and making the rule to do our sunsets in W. Turner's way<sup>1</sup> (see p. 188), we will agree to wash over our cloud-forms when drawn: but drawn they must be. Good forms half washed out are better than they were before. So indeed are bad ones: but then the further course of treatment is different, because the good ones may be left to stand perhaps for centuries, and the bad ones ought only to be further improved by washing till they disappear altogether and you have the paper to try again on. In short, wherever in your picture you are able to use the sponge without disturbing any under-coat of colour—and wherever you use it to produce a designed effect—there you are right:

<sup>1</sup> Or it may be better for beginners to reverse it, beginning with pure water and adding colour from another saucer or palette.



but when you have got, say as far as the more remote part of your middle-distance, then resign all thought of everything except definite drawing. If you have an error or a mess anywhere, wash it right out, and all that is in its immediate neighbourhood, down to the paper: but do not try to obtain chance effects, by washing two or three madders, cobalt, yellow ochre, and light red, already mixed in greys, into a kind of purée over your carefully drawn lines. Accidental effects and successes are a nuisance to be avoided by every student; they only tempt him to forget the purpose of his work, the thought he started with, and the lines he drew to guide him in realizing it. Excitement and confusion are the curse of beginners in original work: and those perhaps suffer most who have most originality—at least, who have most feeling.

So do not wash your sky without a reason and design, or your distance at all. And as to paper, use the smoothest on which you can get colour to run pleasantly, without forming irregular edges and stains from too rapid drying. Yet there is a reason for the use of moderately rough paper by those who can be trusted to draw accurately upon it, and not abuse it. It is that greater brilliancy of colour may be obtained upon it. Every one knows that the brilliant colours we see in Nature (as in flowers), or in various fabrics (as in velvet pile), owe their richness in great measure to the nature of the surface which reflects them. The petals of a flower are composed, like velvet, of small filaments placed close together, each of which has a light side and a dark

side. Now, purity of colour is destroyed equally by too much light and too little; (in any round coloured object on which light falls, the purest points of colour are somewhere between the light and the shade). Therefore there will be a high light, a dark side, and a part which shews the true and perfect colour, on every filament of the velvet and on every little projection of the paper, and, from the form of the projections, a particle of pure colour will be sent from each to the eye in any position. Now, a coloured surface which is perfectly smooth depends entirely on the angle of its light, and only a few of the rays which are most favourable to the colour reach the eye in any one position. The eminences of the rougher paper each reflect you a ray of the colour at its best, and consequently you get more perfect colour in the same space: though at the same time there is a greater absorption of light.

To return to our skies and distances. It will be understood that all colours must be greatly changed by distance from the eye. Great part, if not the whole, of the subject of aërial perspective is involved in these changes of colour: and their various causes cannot be enquired into here. It is enough to say that from refraction, which increases according to the quantity of moisture in the air, and often from the presence of more or less visible water vapour, all colours in distance are in a certain degree discharged, and made to blend together into a nearly uniform tint of bluish-grey. As has been hinted in Part I, in the chapter on the works of Masaccio, the term 'Aërial Perspective' is somewhat undefined, and may

mean anything, from the effect of projection which is caused by our naturally binocular or stereoscopic view of objects, to the partial or entire evanescence of a mountain-scene behind rising mist or stooping thunder-cloud. In fact, it is a matter of colour or of the use of white with other hues, practically speaking; and in a book like this, mainly consisting of rules, we can only speak of linear perspective; because it only is reducible to rule. There is no telling anybody how blue or how dim a distance may look: nor is it easy to say how many different causes may produce what are called effects of aërial perspective in different parts of the world. I have seen mist drawn up, exactly like a curtain, displaying the whole valley of the Rhone, from the top of the pass above Martigny; and have had, for ten minutes, a sudden vision from the slopes of the Faulhorn of the whole Lower Glacier of Gründlwald. I have seen the Mount of Deliverance, and all the Desert round the Gulf of Suez, reeling with mirage and dim with excess of light. Everybody has seen English fogs and thunder-storms; and every sketcher at least will know the way in which all the usual conditions of warm and cold greys are inverted, when the sun shines powerfully on a heavy bank of rain-clouds, changing what was purple and black into warm brown and yellow. Yet all the indescribably different ways of expressing distance under these various lights come under aërial perspective, so called; while the effect of space and distance in clear sunsets, &c., depends greatly on there being no mist at all: nor can there be any in many historical pictures

in which the foreground is everything, and no distance is introduced, as in Millais' *Huguenot*<sup>1</sup>. The fact is, that though expression of aërial distance depends greatly on obscurity or cold colour, it may be produced in Nature by other causes, and may therefore be referred to other causes in a picture, unless it tell its tale ably. But distance depending on linear perspective, i. e. on real drawing, is unmistakeable; though it often takes a real draughtsman to appreciate it in a picture. However, a certain licence is allowed to the weakness of man, who cannot draw all things; and so it happens sometimes that figures in a picture, under ordinary calm daylight and not fifty yards from the eye, have a blue or grey medium scumbled in between them and the front of the scene<sup>2</sup>. It is theatrical, and wrong: but it is always being done, and then its perpetrators talk about aërial perspective, because they either cannot draw or will not trust their drawing. 'Da mihi fallere,' quoth Juvenal, 'et fraudibus objice nubem'<sup>3</sup>—and if 'fraus' may rightly be construed 'bad drawing,' the quotation applies perfectly to our own highly finished pictures. The honest rule for either student or painter is always to aim at clearness, unless he wishes to call attention to obscurity, as in storm effects, which have a set of phenomena of their own well worth recording. The incident of a cloud on a hill-side may be intended to convey the idea of new-fallen rain rising again in

<sup>1</sup> See *The Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Hamerton, *A Painter's Camp*, 'On Aërial Perspective about Glencoe,' &c.

<sup>3</sup> 'Grant me not to be found out—and hide my impostures in a mist.'<sup>2</sup>







‘dewy steam’<sup>1</sup>, or of bad weather coming on; or it may be put there only to cover space—in the first or second case the picture is better for it, in the other it is worse.

To take up the frontispiece in its colours. Three stages are given which illustrate the system on which you have been advised to paint; viz. that of using transparent or semi-transparent colour, and of working from light to shade throughout. Look well at its First Stage, and compare that carefully with the finished chromograph, which you must have before you for that purpose all through your work. For these pages are an attempt at giving you such a lesson as a fairly good master would give you, by painting before you from Nature, and giving explanations as his work proceeds. The finished frontispiece stands for Nature: the two earlier stages represent the advancing transcript. Neat and attentive work should enable you to do something nearly as good as the latter; and you ought to work up to the colour of the former, and at last surpass it, by means of that sharpness of touch which nothing but educated eyes and fingers can produce.

#### FIRST STAGE OF FRONTISPIECE.

Now lay aside the finished frontispiece, take up the first stage, and make an outline of it, with a hard pencil, clear, fine, and in the lighter parts of the picture, where local colour and shadows are faint, scarcely perceptible. It will be better to make this

<sup>1</sup> Christian Year—‘Morning Hymn.’

on a scale of not less than twice the size of the actual plate. If your pencil lines are too strong at first, rub them nearly out with bread, so as not to have any black lead on the paper, which might spoil the purity of your colours. In the foreground, or where the shadows are stronger, this caution is of no consequence, as the colour will hide the lines. Forms of clouds should never be drawn with the pencil when they form part of a water-colour picture: but careful studies in line should be made of clouds only, at other times.

Next put in the principal shadows on those objects which are well defined in light and shade, as the dark sides of the large stone and some of the others in the middle of the picture; also the dark foliage, leaving the rather intricate bright-green forms of the leaves untouched. If you have made a good outline, and will use a small brush, you will be able to do this neatly: and having once done it, you will have made some progress in mapping out your work, and really know where the colours are coming, so as to be able to lay them on quickly and confidently; for quickness of touch is everything in water-colour, when correctness is once gained. Use cobalt and brown or rose madder (or perhaps light red) for these guiding shadows, and let all dry.

This is a kind of exception to our general rule of 'dark over light'—but observe that the actual work of laying on colour is not yet begun. These grey shadows ought not to be dark enough materially to affect the stronger colours which are to come over them. They are only meant to determine the



whereabouts of the shadows, and to save time and confusion hereafter. When you have to match the local colour, you ought to have form as decided and as little distracting as possible.

Now pass a light tint of yellow ochre, mixed with a *little* brown madder or light red, over the whole drawing: *except* where any pure colour is to come, as in the bright yellow-greens in the middle, the two blackberry sprays against the stone on the right, and the purple heath-bells and ferns to right and left. Proceed thus: begin at top with clear water, add a very little of the tint as you descend, and increase it towards the bottom<sup>1</sup>:—but keep it light throughout, or your picture will look hot. (Of course in an Eastern subject you would want heat and glare, and would reverse this caution; but even there you must be moderate, for fear of losing light.) The effect of this ought to be to bring the picture together in the first instance, and prevent your falling out of tone; that is to say, losing the proper relative intensity of tint in different objects according to distance. According to our former definition, intensity of tint will mean the same thing as pitch of shade (expressed in sepia or one colour only); intensity of hue will mean purity and force of colour. Lemon-yellow or extract of vermilion are intense hues; violet-carmine an intense tint. The strength of this warm ground tint, as has been already hinted, must depend on the warmth or coldness of the light you wish to diffuse over your picture: sunset is warmer

<sup>1</sup> See W. Turner's method, p. 188.

than sunrise, and sunshine than the diffused daylight of a cloudy morning.

There is another reason for this warm tint, which is, that water-colours have a tendency to dry colder than they looked when first put on. As the paper dries the colour clings closer to the surface, from which more white light is thrown back, so that the tints look paler and colder. But if a *pure* blue sky be required (which is very unlikely, unless you are representing a space between clouds after rain) the warm wash must not go over it. Its chief value as regards colour is, that it keeps down or subdues all the hues except the pure colours, to which of course you wish to call attention. You will be able easily and quickly to vary its strength in different parts of the picture, as on the stones and dark water, if you have studied them carefully, so as always to know where they are.

Now take up the different parts and paint the tints in the first stage over them in correct form, as near as you can.

The sky is cobalt, slightly broken by the under-tint, and carried over the grey distance.

The grey distance, rose madder and cobalt. Then wash your brush lightly; half dry it (not in your mouth, but on blotting paper), and take a little more rose madder into it, with some yellow ochre. Lay it on the hill-side to the left, running a little of the grey in again at bottom and carrying the same over the right-hand far hill-side almost to the right side of the paper, leaving the ragged edge. Let dry.

Mix a little white with all these hues.

Next, the lower edge of moor on the left—a little

green at top (faint Prussian blue, burnt sienna, and gamboge); brush half-washed, and the madder mixture run in below to form.

Now take up the lightest stone-colour—light red and cobalt;—best match all the tints and hues on the side of your copy. Run it all over the stones, dark green shade and water; avoiding the two blackberry sprays on the right. You have them drawn in pencil—go as near their lines as you can, but at all events leave them clear. If your copy is twice or thrice the size of the frontispiece you ought to be able to manage this, if you have gone through proper training. You will soon feel the benefit of sound training in every touch: your brush will begin to go right of itself, as soon as your eye and mind are used to the forms, and your work will look always like a workman's. Of course even a good studio-workman will hesitate at landscape forms at first: the only thing is, that if he wishes to learn them, he will do so in a very short time. A good Latin scholar will stick at an Italian book a little at first, but a week of dictionary will enable him to read it pretty freely.

Where there are evidently two tints on anything, lay on the lightest first, according to our rule. You must be most careful in your forms everywhere: but where you have a darker tint in reserve to define them, you need not be so anxious about the lighter one. For instance, you next lay on your bright greens—emerald green pure on the blackberries only; emerald green and gamboge elsewhere, with here and there a blending of the dark warm green. Then touch the masses of heather-bloom, with rose madder and a little white, all over. As has been partly said, when it is dry you will be able

to work out the forms by putting in the dark green stalks and foliage, carving the pink blossoms out, as it were, with the deeper colours. So with the ferns below, and with the bright ash saplings in the centre, and the blackberries below them. Finally, the dark water, when sharply put in with burnt sienna and a little grey or green, will give great effect to the stones. Lighten it a *little* with the brush for their reflections, and, if necessary, glaze over again with burnt sienna, or that and gamboge.

Remember particularly that wherever light cuts against dark in intricate form our rule is absolute that the light should be correctly laid on first; since the darker tint can always be used to cut out the proper shape of the lighter hue, though that, when first laid on, may have somewhat transgressed its boundaries.

Mixing colours in the brush, as I have recommended, is a matter of practice. It gives natural transition of colour with a certain degree of truth, and determines much for the picture, as colours contrasting well and quickly blended into each other secure good effect throughout. The leading rule is, *do not touch twice*; good, bad, or indifferent, as the case may be, carry your tint evenly up to the next necessary outline of form; soften it off, or leave it sharp, and let it all dry before you alter: you will often find it dry to your satisfaction.







## SECOND STAGE OF FRONTISPIECE.

When the ground-colours of a water-colour drawing are laid on, as in our first stage, the real work may be said to be mapped out rather than begun. At the same time, if it has been well thought out beforehand, if a good preliminary sketch or blot has been made, or if the student has studied his subject well enough to know what he is going to do, he may proceed in a methodical way, with tolerable certainty of fair success. It may be remarked that the intricacy and minuteness of the frontispiece will be of the greatest use to any one who will faithfully work out a copy of it, because it will prepare him in some degree for the difficulties of close sketching from Nature. Without anticipating the chapter on that subject, it is enough to say, that any person who has hitherto only drawn from models or single objects in the studio will be surprised and confused, in all probability, in his first attempts in the open air, or from a tent, or window. He has hitherto drawn uncompromisingly, and with the certainty of being able to render all he has seen before him to draw. He has now to realize from the first that he cannot represent all that meets his eye; to effect a series of compromises between his own powers and the multiplicity and variety of Nature; to put in this and leave out that; to be confused by grandeur of general impression, and distracted by beauty of detail. The sharpness of eye he has acquired will, for a time, tend rather to his confusion, by making him see more into form: and, moreover, he has now to deal with subjects where change

and motion are involved. This is why we recommended careful study of the frontispiece before taking up the representation of its first stage. We wanted the thought of the sharp-eyed sketcher, well trained in-doors, to pass through the student's mind, 'How am I ever to get all that in?' In short, the frontispiece is the result of a tough and successful struggle with Nature, and its difficulties are in some degree those of drawing from Nature. As we have said, our studio-trained pupil is like a good Latin scholar beginning to read and speak Italian. He feels he has a great deal to learn. But he will learn it very much sooner than one who knows no Latin.

The second stage of the drawing introduces us to a new set of difficulties, which depend on knowledge of Nature rather than of Art. Now we have hitherto talked of nothing but Art, or technical means of representing Nature. A book on the Beauties of External Nature, and which of them to choose for subject, and how to represent them, would soon grow into a whole library, if it were faithfully written. All we can do is to point out some of the natural phenomena in the frontispiece, chosen for their beauty, fitness, and interest, and give the student some notion of how to record them: when he has made a good copy of the work before him, he will not be totally helpless before Nature. But exact recipe what to do is henceforth impossible.

However, take the distant mountain in the second stage and put in its shade with pure cobalt, and perhaps a little white. Then take a little rose madder with it, and put in the edgy distinct shadows in correct form on the distant hills right and left. They represent



hollows in the mountain, or shadows of rocks. The rose madder patches on the top of the left-hand hill are patches of distant heather. Put them in, imitating the horizontal streaky touch, which in fact represents the perspective of the little plots of heather growing along far-off ridges. Use a small long-haired brush, and cut sideways with it. Darken the upper stones, and the central oak-bush; and now pay great attention to cutting out the light forms of the ash and black-berry<sup>1</sup>. Put some brown madder into your darker green for the shade hue; or use raw sienna, brown madder, and cobalt together; or gamboge, indigo, and a little Indian red.

Unless you are quite sure of them, trace out the forms of the ferns and leaves in right and left foreground with a sharp hard pencil, following the outline left in the second stage. Then put on the shade with a fine brush, leaving the lights, and working as quickly as possible, never touching more than you can help. You will see what value the shade will give the bright greens which are left. So with the grass on right hand.

Go over the water with burnt sienna and gamboge, gradating from the dark shadow under the big stone: leave the centre reflection; and observe that the brown peat water reflects a light object much better than a dark one.

Take a faint transparent grey (your original madder and cobalt will do), and go over the undulation of the

<sup>1</sup> The perfect sharpness of the bright leaves is reserved for the *last* shadow, as, were it done now, it would have to be repeated with that—nearly impossible to do exactly.

light surface of the big stone; and model the others also with a darker and warmer grey, adding a little Vandyke brown to the grey you are using.

Add some stronger touches of rose madder to the heather-blossom.

Faintest rose madder and cobalt shadow on the white cloud.

### THIRD STAGE OF FRONTISPIECE.

This stage of your subject tries both your knowledge of Nature and your technical skill considerably more than the others. It requires a smaller brush than the others, and darker and more transparent colours. Almost the whole surface of the drawing has to be gone over again with small touches: and the great difficulty is, that these touches ought not to be an unmeaning stipple, but everywhere suggestive of form. It is the misfortune, and not the fault, of the chromographed frontispiece, that, like all chromographs, it wants the rapid sharpness of touch and minute significance of form which the original possesses in a remarkable degree. But there is enough form in it to render it highly instructive, and more particularly so to those who have been accustomed to careful sketching and watchful observation of natural objects of landscape. Advice about finishing your copy must necessarily be more vague than before. But, supposing that you have produced a decent imitation of the second stage, you will have a tolerable idea of what is required to finish your work, even before you take up the third. That want is expressed by the words

‘making out.’ That is to say, you want additional facts principally of form: for on our system of laying dark over light the pure colours are left from the first, and if they have been kept clear, you have already secured the best part of your colour. It is possible for you to glaze with transparent tints, and so give greater richness to your work in parts; but finish of that kind is beyond all rule and direction. So, indeed, are the broad washes of shadow which water-colourists are always having recourse to when detail has been painted too strongly in middle-distance or elsewhere, and when various objects at different distances look equally forcible. Under such circumstances the eye does not know where to go in the picture; there is no governing point of attraction, but various points which are equally attractive, and the attention is not properly led on from one to the other. To do this is the object of composition; and in the chapter on that subject some principles and rules are attempted. At present we can only say, that a half-finished drawing often looks unconnected, and what painters call ‘spotty.’ They then say that it wants ‘bringing together,’ or massing: and this generally has to be done by throwing broad veils of shadow over those lights which separate isolated features. This, however necessary, is still a corrective process (unless, indeed, it has been designed from the first), and in theory ought not to be necessary, as the features of the drawing ought to be put in at once at the right pitch of shade and hue; and to have been composed and arranged at first in proper subordination to each other.

Now compare the second and third stage, and proceed

to make out the two distant hills by putting in quick triangular or lancet-shaped touches of light ultramarine or cobalt, which stand for shadows of rocks seen in perspective. Express the undulations of the moor-ground by hatched lines in the proper direction. Deepen with small sharp touches suggestive of rock (to learn to suggest you must study rocks or rock-photographs) the 'coire,' or hollow side of distant mountain. Then take up your foreground of grass and leaves, with small touches of gamboge, burnt sienna, and Prussian blue, in different strengths. Be very careful to give the masses of foliage their perspective: notice the roundness of the dark bushes and the brambles in the foreground. Observe how the sprays and leaves stand *like* leaves, edgeways in great measure, and all shewing different perspectives. Do not miss a leaf, that is to say, put in every one you can as it stands in the copy. If it be too intricate, that is what it is there for: it represents Nature, which is still more complex, and is in fact intended to puzzle you. Take a part separately on another piece of paper: for instance, the ferns, &c. between the two nearest grey stones on the left, and try to imitate them exactly: and then return to the rest. Whatever the look of your copy may be in the end, you will have gained considerably by having made it; and will feel that gain with the very next drawing you begin.

The water is now finished by clear touches of Van-dyke brown, which represent the shadows of its faint ripple, or its deeper parts. The yellow lights are pebbles at the bottom, slightly interfered with by faint stone-grey reflections from the large stones above the water.



Notice, and try to render, the variety and gradation of depth in the colours of the little pool.

Almost every square inch of the frontispiece will make a useful exercise, especially of its foreground: and no one who can imitate its bushes and foliage pretty well is likely to feel helpless, when he has to draw trees on a larger scale.

## REMARKS.

The student may be now supposed to have reached the point at which he may begin original work, or, in other words, begin to study Nature for himself without rigidly prescribed method. We apprehend that the term 'original' is, when well considered, a very wide one in Art; and that it applies to all pictures, &c. in which either pupil or master attempts to record for himself what he has seen for himself. It is quite natural and quite right, and an excellent way of employing time, for a young person to make careful copies of good pictures or models under the eye of a master, or even without one. But it can only result in a copy, or repetition of another person's work. When the pupil has gained skill enough to observe Nature with an eye to recording the beauty of Nature, and to set such record on paper in an intelligible form, the work produced will not perhaps look so successful as a copy, but it will be a work in another and far higher class.

The Exercises already set forth are almost entirely technical. They have been principally on Form, because power of representing form is much more easily communicated than power of colour. We have anticipated,

in the last chapter, a statement we now repeat, that colour in Landscape, and all highly interesting or complicated subject, is always to a great extent conventional. This is caused, as has been said, by the high lights of Nature being brighter than any white or yellow light which can be put into a picture. It is also true that the deepest shadows of any scene which contains powerful light and shade are stronger than any black or deep brown with which we can match them in painting it. It follows that all the scales of colour we can give are more or less tentative and conventional, and that in using them the student will have to trust his own eyes after all. It has already been explained, that on Rembrandt's system of giving up colour in the dark shades, and choosing subjects like single heads and dark interiors where the brightest light *was* strictly within his reach, almost absolute truth may be attained. But the possibility of this will depend on the subject; and any landscape scene of natural light and shade, or figure-subject involving variety of tint and colour, will put it out of the question; the range of light and shade and variety of colour are so infinitely greater in an open-air scene than in an interior.

Landscape studies in water-colour will naturally come first. As most commonly happens, our student's choice of subject may be already determined by natural taste or previous study. Those who prefer the modern water-colour styles of more or less conscientious drawing, will choose their master more or less wisely, and imitate Nature more or less in his way. Harding's, or Cox's, or Prout's published

examples and advanced lessons in water-colour will probably find many disciples; and very considerable advance may be made by taking them as guides. Their tints of colour may be used, and their usual methods of composition studied, and an attentive disciple will soon pick up their simpler arrangements of light and shade, and learn to dispose his own sketches in the same way. But hardly any one who has gone with tolerable attention through the lessons we have already given, ought to think it enough to arrange sketches into problems of light and shade in a methodical and dictated way. Enough accuracy of eye and delicacy of hand ought now to have been gained, to dispose the student himself to modify the manner of any master he may have chosen for the time; and in fact to begin to form a style of his own. There is no harm done if he remains a copyist: for he may record natural facts in David Cox's way to the end of his lifetime without the process doing him anything but good: but being himself, and not David Cox, he ought to have in him a way of his own. Of course he must fall short of his models in their strong points; but he ought to be able to see their weak ones plainly enough, and wish to avoid them. Besides this, the real power of drawing which he will have gained will probably make his style in landscape a rather defined one at first, and he will be both able and willing to realize and work out his foregrounds with some attempt at exactness. And while he honestly indulges this ambition his success is almost a certainty; though he may feel unexpected disappointments at first. Memory, feeling,

and past travel and experience of scenery and natural effects will be all called into play. He is able to draw anything that will wait for him, perhaps; but he will soon find himself, in natural study, struggling with waves and clouds, and gazing after evanescent bursts of light. The freedom and incessant variety and change of Nature will confuse him at first; and he will find new ideas of space, multitude, and vastness come to him in a highly disturbing manner. And this effect will be yet further increased if he belongs to the first of two classes, into which all persons of good sight, considered as actual or possible artists, may be divided.

These are, in two words, the minute-sighted, and the far-sighted. This difference has been long ago pointed out in Mr. Ruskin's pamphlet on Pre-Raphaelitism, where the essential principles of good Art-work are proved to be the same in exact foreground work as in well-rendered subjects which involve distance and a wide horizon. He takes Millais as the representative of limited space and minute realization of detail on a comparatively large scale, and Turner as the great master of effects and impressions; equally faithful in detail, as detail would appear to the eye of a spectator whose attention is really called upon by objects of great interest and beauty in distance or middle-distance. The difference, roughly speaking, is that of scale. Where the whole scene of a picture is bounded by the four walls of a court or small garden, or a corner of either of them, all the objects of detail strike the eye differently, and are, as a matter of common sense, to be rendered more sharply, than where the eye of the spectator



ranges over a wide valley or chain of mountains: the vastly greater extent of horizon and space of course makes all the difference; the principle of painting things seen as they are seen being equally carried out by both artists. But the distinction between the typical characters had better be given in the words of its first observer:—

‘Suppose two men, equally honest and industrious, equally impressed with a humble desire to render some part of what they see in Nature faithfully. One has feeble memory and invention and excessively keen sight; the other is impatient, has a memory which nothing escapes, and unresting invention, and is (comparatively) near-sighted. Set them both free in a mountain valley. One sees everything, small and large, with almost the same clearness, mountains and grasshoppers alike. . . . He chooses some small portion out of the infinite scene, and calculates the number of weeks which must elapse before he can do justice to the intensity of his perceptions. . . . The other has been watching the change of the clouds, and the march of the light along the mountain-sides. He beholds the entire scene in broad soft masses of true gradation. . . . (There are) multitudes of circumstances impossible for him to represent. But there is not one change in the jagged shadows along the hollows of the hills but is fixed on his mind. . . . As for his sitting down to “draw from Nature,” there was not one of the things which he wished to represent that stayed for so much as five seconds together: but none of them escaped, for all that. It is absurd to expect these men to possess any of the qualities of each other.’

The leading distinction between the methods of work which these two sorts of men will pursue will of course turn on this, that one man’s whole subject will generally wait for him, the other’s will not.

Both, however, must cultivate rapidity and decision—the first of course depending on the last. The student here enters on the painter's great difficulty and leading rule of knowing what he has to do, and doing it. It will be more fully spoken of when we come to our chapter on Landscape Sketching from Nature. But rapidity is absolutely necessary in water-colour, to prevent drying and unpleasant edges in one's work; and, moreover, the particles of colour seem to arrange and gradate themselves best in quick touches. But a rule already hinted at (p. 180), must now be 'made absolute' in all our work: that every touch that is put on shall have a planned form, or be part of a larger planned form. Though it may be impossible to carry this rule out altogether, still it cannot be approached too closely. It is the habit of rendering form with single touches, made expressive on both sides of the brush at once, which makes water-colour training so valuable, as it necessitates continual attention, and incessant application of the eye and mind. We repeat, the outline of each touch must often express form on both sides. The slower processes of oil-colour are surer and less distracting. Of course if it were possible to store one's memory with forms, by any means except repeated attempt at rendering forms, such means might be taken, and the painter might duly form a stock of ideas in his memory, and then deliberately compose from it in oil-colour. But the painter's memory is best supplied with form by practice in the quick clear touches, broad or subtle, of the water-colour brush: from it he will soonest learn what expression is: and he may enter on all

painting through its means, as piano-practice will introduce him to all music. Perhaps the ideal artist's career would thus begin with water-colour to gain facility and multitudinous fulness of expression. He would then produce works of elaborate power in oil; then, when his vigour of mind had reached its height and his technical knowledge was at the full, he would go on to the speed and decisive breadth of fresco, returning to the rapidity of the water-colour system. We apprehend that this is the principle of Michael Angelo's traditional saying, that oil-painting was work for women, and fresco for men: that the latter is so great a test of force, rapidity, and decision, both spiritual and technical, in thought and working: besides that, fresco is unalterable, and thus exaggerates water-colour difficulties.

Strictly speaking, then, water-colour must be considered as a preliminary training for the more powerful means of pictorial expression in oil and fresco. At all events, some of the best water-colours in existence have been produced by men skilled in oil-painting, and by the use of body-colour or transparent vehicle in large quantities, so as to resemble oil-colours in the working. This will apply to Mr. Lewis's works, and indeed to the late Mr. William Hunt's; which seem to unite in great measure the advantages of both styles. How far the use of body-colour ought to be carried we do not think of saying; but it ought not to be used in water-colour as an imitation of oils, at all events. For elaborate water-colour, as for all compositions, the rule is of course masses first, detail afterwards.

When we have to speak of Composition, we shall endeavour to give some examples of arrangement of masses and points of interest<sup>1</sup>. And until the proper arrangement of a picture is secured, detail must not be attended to. Solidity and tone must come first; that is to say, you must get the right blue, and the right pitch of blue, on your distance, and the right depth of green, red, yellow, or brown on your woods, and the right quantity of light and of dark all settled, before you begin to make out the drawing of the objects all over your picture. Of course your previous knowledge of all such drawing ought to have been secured by sketches and studies. And one great secret of success for a learner is to make a good blotted sketch in sepia beforehand, without much form, but with the desired effect in light and shade; and to have by him, with it, a set of etched lines of all the forms in the intended work. He should also have written down on the margin of the light-and-shade blot the actual 'pigments' he intends to use to make the light and dark varied tints which are to take the place, in the finished work, of the uniform black-and-white masses in the preliminary blot.

<sup>1</sup> We shall have to distinguish between conceptions and compositions, i. e. between pictures where the eyesight, feeling, and inspiration of the artist dictate all, or nearly all, (so that he is unconscious of following any particular rule or principle in arranging his objects)—and pictures more technically or methodically produced. The latter, as works of Art, are inferior; but they may be instructive to the student who wants to analyze the manner (or habitual method of self-expression) of the painter he is studying.



## CHAPTER IV.

## I.

## ON FINISH.

IT would be hard to find any single term in Art which has led, and at this day leads, to more varied discussion than the word 'Finish.' It is connected with all the questions between High Art so called, and Low Art so called; and with all the varieties of opinion which are embraced, and familiarly expressed, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, in the statement that 'the Dutch painters represent the low school, and the Italian painters the lofty one.' He instances Michael Angelo, and says that he and the Italians attend only to the invariable, the great and general ideas which are fixed and inherent in universal Nature; while the Dutch attend to literal truth and minute exactness, in detail, of Nature modified by accident. He says also, that if Michael Angelo had paid the same attention to detail of Nature so modified, his works would 'not only receive no advantage, but would lose in a great measure the effect which they now have on every mind susceptible of great and noble ideas.'

Sir Joshua Reynolds' practice was as habitually contradictory to the general drift of his instructions as any painter's can possibly be. His reputation rests (and in the same circle with that of Velasquez and

Titian) principally on the fact that he drew ladies' faces with exquisite attention to the accidents which modify those interesting but changeful phenomena. The word 'accident' is used in the passage to which we have referred in a correct logical sense. An accident, strictly defined as a logical term, is that which comes into uncertain connexion with, or joins itself by contingency to, the essence of the individual person or thing. Either it does so at once and for ever, like a past happiness or sorrow, or only for a time, like having black hair, which may fall off or turn white; or standing up, or sitting down, or a fall out hunting or skating. A lady's face may have been sunburnt by accident when Sir Joshua observed it, and he may have put a little yellow into his carmine in consequence; yet the picture by no means 'lost its effect on a mind capable of receiving noble ideas' because of that. Good or bad temper is an accident, or rather good or bad humour. The picture in Christ Church Hall of Archbishop Robinson has an expression of quiet annoyance in its side-look, arising, says tradition, from the fact that the bishop, a severely studious man, would never spare the time to sit for his portrait, and consequently had to be drawn by stealth. This was done through a door, near which Sir Joshua was placed, obtaining views of the bishop by means of successive messages which necessitated the door's being opened and the bishop's looking up. Whether this story be true or not, it will be admitted that Sir Joshua was right in painting the bishop with an expression of subdued irritation—because he then and there looked irritated, though uncomplaining—rather than

paint him without any expression at all, or with some generally episcopal expression. Expression is an accident; yet neither Sir Joshua nor Michael Angelo,—nor Giotto, nor the unknown Byzantines who painted mournful Madonnas in the first days,—ever failed to strive for every particle of expression they could possibly give every face they painted. It is quite true that Sir Joshua sometimes painted drapery carelessly, which was very excusable at a time when ladies sat to him in a kind of white bedgown. And he very often painted his backgrounds carelessly, which we think less excusable, because he need not have painted them at all, but might have let somebody else do them better. But many, nay all, of the great Italians paint landscape backgrounds with details, accidents, and incidents enough, with devoted care and strong personal enjoyment. Then as to accidents of dress, than which no humbler pieces of detail can be imagined; Titian, as a master of Italian painting in every style of history and portrait, was the choice of Sir Joshua's choice; for our own great painter preferred Velasquez to all other masters, and Velasquez certainly preferred Titian<sup>1</sup>. This is true, whether Sir Joshua was thinking of Titian or not when he made his astonishing statement in the 'Idler,' 'that he did not mean to include the Venetian School in his idea of Italian painting, because it might be said to represent the Dutch part of the Italian genius.' And for Titian's drawing of details and accidents, we must, we fear, appeal to painters only, because only they who have tried to copy him can tell how resolute and complete

<sup>1</sup> Ruskin, 'The Two Paths,' p. 83. See Appendix 2.

it is. It is quite true that its unlaboured perfection does not withdraw attention from the main subject or motive of the picture: but still its details are made perfect by Titian's hand; and to this day, he who would follow Titian must finish in detail, and work out accidents with considerable labour and difficulty, however easily Titian worked them out. You will not get near Titian by leaving out what he put in. And he put in *all*. The great portrait of the Doge Andrea Gritti, at Denmark Hill, is as good and as accessible an instance of perfect work in detail, perfectly carried out, as can be wished for. *Perfectly* it is worked out, in this sense: because the Doge, or rather Andrea Gritti the Doge, strikes one at the first glance; there is nothing in the magnificent dress to which the Doge is not superior,—he dignifies his fine clothes, and not they him, although they are finished to absolute completeness and rightness. It is not, be it observed, as with a grand historical or religious subject, where the interest of the action necessarily triumphs over well-wrought accessories, and where dresses and details may be carried out with ever so much pains, without distracting the spectator's attention from the principal action. It is in a simple portrait that the character of the subject is made so to prevail over all his entourage. When Crambe told Martinus Scriblerus that he could conceive of a Lord Mayor without his gown, chain, attendants, body or digestive organs, that great master of dialectic simply called him a fool. A modern critic of portraiture, more sensible than Crambe of the importance of costume, would naturally pay no small attention to the Doge's berretta and gold embroidery. Yet no



person with education, feeling, or soul above buttons, can help seeing how great is the Art-power which is shewn, in that accurate finish of the splendid dress, which never for a moment diverts any attention from the stout Lord of the Adriatic. There is no mistaking his fine-cut *Coeur-de-Lion* type of face, his wide-opened blue eye of good nature and command, his sharp chiselled mouth of action, thick bull-neck of strength, and soft beard and hair of high blood. All this is written down in colour and subtle form for all men to see: but Titian's work was not done when it was written. On the contrary, every line of woven gold in his embroidered cloak plays and reflects light in exactly the right place, as the cunning pattern undulates over its folds. The yellow paint looks exactly like actual gold, so artfully is its tint changed from darker to lighter in each fold of the stuff<sup>1</sup>. It is all separate stripes; and the tint has been changed with methodical exactness in every one, so that the folds of the dress are pointed out by the waving of its pattern. In short, Titian puts the gold-work on the Doge's coat of state for exactly the same reason as the Doge put that coat on his body—as a proper accessory, befitting him, and worthy of his office, and requiring proper treatment and care in its subordinate place. It is the same with Titian's forest-leaves, and stones, and tree-trunks: all have their detailed statements of minor fact. It may not have been painful to him to carry them so far; evidently it was quite the contrary: nor did it probably take him so long a time as

<sup>1</sup> This answers, we think, almost exactly to what painters mean by the mysterious term 'quality' in work.

would appear, since time in Art-work is lost by changing and correcting, and the great master's purpose altered not, nor did his science ever need to reconsider the means by which he would carry his purpose out. So with Leonardo's subtle finish, or Rafael's. Can you find blotted leaves, or scrawled grass, or doughy tree-trunks, or clayey stones in either? You are not led aside from faces and forms to look at the stones under them, it is true. But Nature put the stones under the feet of men, with minute veins and varied colour in them: and so does Leonardo. The fact is, he who can command or produce Beauty, Truth, or Power in the motive of his picture will never lessen its value or impressiveness, by trying to give it inferior beauties and truths in its accessories. The effect of a large sapphire is not diminished by its being surrounded with small diamonds. And, on the other hand, we think that the man who is not painter and workman enough at heart to want to draw his accessories like a workman, is not a likely person to have, certainly not a likely person to realize on canvas, any great and powerful ideas. Not to mention that a real workman can paint things right with great rapidity, and without vexation to himself.

In our sketch of the life of Giotto, allusion is made to the story of his circle, drawn as the only specimen of his skill he would send Pope Benedict XI. This is connected with our use of the word 'workman.' We apprehend that word, emphatically spoken, to be nearly the most honourable unofficial title in the English language. And the word has so much to do with the question of artistic finish, completeness, and

excellence (and indeed with excellence in all human pursuits), that it will lead us very well into our theory of finish, or completion, or excellence. For clearly a finished performance ought to be better and better the more it is finished, until it becomes excellent, i.e. conspicuously good of its kind, and according to its author's purpose. The author of 'Modern Painters' has been over this ground before, but very few critics have followed him over it, and we apprehend we are right in trying to do so.

The word 'workman,' used emphatically or with grave meaning, is highly honourable when applied to any man, because it is specially used as a word of praise by persons who possess real skill, and who affect the use of few words. It is much used with reference to riding, taciturnity being a great point in the horse-taming character, as Englishmen possess it. Lord Scamperdale explained his question about somebody by the cover side, 'Is he a workman?' by saying that he did not want to know whether the gentleman was a mechanic by profession or not, but whether he could really ride or not. The adjective 'workmanlike' is more generally applied, and conveys the idea at least of genuine and unpretending skill, in doing a difficult thing well worth doing: strictly indeed of professional skill, of that thoroughness and excellence of performance which is gained by giving one's life to a particular style of labour. The difference between amateur work and professional work in everything is recognized all over the world; and we have already adverted to it as regards amateur Art.

Now, as the words 'work,' 'workman,' and their cognates, are all highly honourable in the ears of all sane people; so the words 'mechanic,' 'mechanical,' and the like, are slightly disparaging. The reason is, we think, in few words, that the former set of words call attention to the performances of a Soul, in point of fact; and imply that a will has honourably sought to do well and rightly, and has been able somehow to get certain results effected, by means of its intellect and its bodily skill in applying that intellect (both, or rather all three, being assisted by experience of previous successful operations). But the word 'mechanic' implies an absence of human energy or thought in the production of the immediate result before one's eyes. The thought which is evident in the result before the spectator does not come from man direct to man, but mediately, and through the ingenuity of others (who are intellectual middlemen, between the producer and the consumer). We do not like a print so well as a picture, generally speaking, or a chromograph so well as its original water-colour; and if we were asked why, we should give our reasons in words which would involve the assertion that one was a mechanical, or manual, work of Art, and the other an original production, due to the immediate connexion between the mind and hand of the producer. And, observe, this is not because the chromograph is not the result of great ingenuity. There is an immense accumulation of ingenuity in the long succession of contrivances which enabled Messrs. Day and Son to produce our frontispiece. But no artist would hesitate a moment in his choice between



the original of that frontispiece, and all the copies of it which adorn our present edition. The ingenuity of the men, who made the machinery, which produced the chromograph, may be greater than that of any painter from Nature, however excellent: but such ingenuity is not artistic, because it only produces a machine, irrespective of the purpose of producing a beautiful thing. The same faculty would produce a steam-engine, or a sewing-machine, or a patent mangle. And doubtless very skilfully made machines of these or other kinds have an excellence of adaptation, which is called beauty in popular language, because it makes one feel a sense of admiration. But though the admiration is fully deserved, the term 'beautiful' is applied to an ingenious contrivance only by way of analogy; and it expresses enjoyment of another man's cleverness, not of the beauty of his work. To Mr. Macdonald's drawing the term 'beauty' is directly applicable: it is so in a less degree to the chromograph at the beginning of this book. Still, though the mechanics who contrived the process of multiplying water-colours did not, probably, work as artists under impressions of admiration and pleasure in Nature, they worked as able and thoughtful men exercising God's gifts of skill, invention, and ingenuity in contrivance. Theirs was a liberal and scientific employment; and the term 'mechanical' does not apply to them in any lowering sense at all; and when applied to the results of their ingenuity, or that of other men like them, that word is used in its true or higher sense, of skilful adaptation of physical means to physical ends.

and is in no sort disparaging. Why, then, is the term ever applied in a sense which *is* disparaging? Because, without in the least undervaluing honest labour of any kind, we cannot help painfully remembering that large numbers of men are condemned, as it were, to labour without thought or enjoyment; and that though they may be, and often are, morally elevated by doing their work hard and honestly, they cannot learn anything by it, or ever enjoy the artistic pleasure of doing it well; or, at all events, cannot enjoy it in the same degree as a painter. We do not know if the printers and workmen, who produced all our chromographs, any of them enjoyed the idea of producing a pretty thing; but in as far as any of them enjoyed it in a genuine way, his work ceased to be mechanical, because it was done in an artistic spirit, more or less rejoicing in beauty. Those who merely screwed down the presses or laid on the colours because it was all in the day's work, acted, as we say, mechanically: their hearts, or souls, or selves were not in what their hands did.

This train of thought brings us to see that the term 'mechanical' means soulless when it is used in a disparaging sense. The word implies absence of energy, thought, spirit, soul, geist, and the like. In other words, it gives us a painful idea of a man's time and life being employed, while the best part of him is not put into his work, or called into exertion, or properly developed. The twenty men who are said to be employed in making one pin, or those who pass life in cutting screws and nuts, or multiplying small parts of machines, are really in danger of a

kind of degradation from their form of labour; from which those who either exercise invention, or seek knowledge or beauty, are *ipso facto* free.

It would seem, then, that a liberal, artistic, inventive, or scientific pursuit is distinguished from a purely mechanical pursuit by the fact that it involves thought or effort of mind. This holds good in spite of exceptions and difficult cases. We may hope, indeed, that many occupations which are far from artistic are pursued in a quasi-artistic spirit, which redeems them, in real truth, from being purely mechanical. It is not our business here to enquire how far moral elements enter into the artistic view of things; but this we may say, that the honest desire to do anything one has to do as well as possible, is the common foundation of artistic and workmanlike feeling. Giotto meant to say, by sending his circle to Pope Benedict, that he could not give account of his inventive genius, because it was God's gift, for which he had not worked; but that he could assure the Pope that the hand which had laboured so many years would always do its work as truly as in the specimen he sent; since he had worked for that gift of hand, and fairly earned it. In a certain undefined sense, 'the hand of Douglas is his own.' Giotto appealed to the Pope's belief in his sense of the workman's honour. And even in the least ornamental or interesting pursuits, we may understand how near the workman's feeling is to the artist's, in lower matter. An old shoemaker once told me he gave up making boots for the Royal Family, as journeyman and actual maker, because a

great deal of fine sewing had to be put into parts about the sole, 'and then all the beauty of the work was lost and blacked over.' The scavenger's saying, about fancy-sweeping round a post, is, I fear, of dubious authority: but it is hard to distinguish between the feeling of Art and that of good work, except by the matter or means on which they are employed. There is a certain pursuit of the really beautiful in the good mason who likes to see his work proved true by plumb-line and spirit-level, and the ploughman who is proud of his straight furrows. And I think that hardly any man, who is deservedly high in the pursuit of great Art, will refuse sympathy with these workmen; or refuse to share their title with them. To do a very difficult thing well is a great thing; but to do a small thing as well as you can for the sake of the *καλόν* is something.

What, then, is workmanlike finish? You must ask each *in sua arte*, and take the best man's word. In Art we will refer to Titian and Leonardo among ancients, and to John Lewis of the moderns. But by our principles, what is true finish likely to be? Is there any finish that is unworthy of the workman? At this point we fear we must leave the more ordinary occupations, commonly and perhaps unworthily called mechanical, and confine ourselves to Art-work. Where the mere enjoyment of his own skill is all that interests or awakens a slight artistic feeling in the operator, it does not signify much what his operation is, as long as he does it well and pleasantly. But pictures are, after all, different and higher things to do than boots, or masonry, or



ploughing, or sweeping. How will our principle about good work having a soul in it and mechanical work not having it, help us here? The smith's work has the smith's soul in it, if he be a good one: so has the artist's: only from the greater simplicity of his work, the smith knows more exactly how far he must carry his work out. Can the artist determine in the same way, and where is he to stop?

We think he can determine: and we here refer the reader to Mr. Ruskin's chapter on Finish, 'Modern Painters,' vol. iii. pp. 113-128. He sums up the whole in half-a-dozen words, that 'All true finish is added fact'—or thought—pointing out by beautiful examples and illustrations from the works of Turner to what distance of completion that great master, to use his own expression, 'carried forward' his pictures. There is a difference between thoughtful, artistic, or high-workmanlike finish, and unmeaning, mechanical, or low-workmanlike finish. Wrong choice in this matter has at least a tendency to vulgarity; since vulgarity has its root in dulness, absence of thought, and deadness of mind which cannot distinguish the finish of completeness from that of mere polish. Our popular notions of turn-out and finish are far too mechanical, for the most part. In our highly finished furniture and decorations, one cannot help noticing that French polish goes for too much. All of us who can afford it pay men for polishing and rubbing up plate and tables, but no one makes any exertion, or puts any pressure on goldsmiths and carpenters, to get oak and walnut well carved, or silver cunningly moulded. Yet in some things we under-

stand the difference between useful and useless finish, between work and polish. The national taste for plainness and unobtrusive appearance is much overstrained and misapplied, and in many things amounts to rejection of beauty and right ornament. But in some things at least it does us justice, and particularly in tools and instruments which are meant to be used by the hands of the rich man himself—in saddlery and harness, for example. Perhaps the best common instance of English good taste in effective completeness is a well-made gun or rifle. It is ugly, and so it ought to be, being an instrument of death.—But its finish is of a high kind, because almost all the labour put into it conduces to its efficiency. The fine steel is darkened, and the choice wood studiously left unpolished, though formed to exact shape suited to the bearer's length of neck and arms. The strength of the locks, the fall of the hammers, the amount of pressure or pull of the triggers are all calculated by ounces. The closeness and force of the smooth barrel is fully ascertained; the grooves and sights of the rifle are tested together till its performance is a certainty; the efficiency, or *usefulness*, of every part of the weapon is perfect; but the national taste and feeling is utterly against wasting ornament on that which is meant to kill.

Now the complicated and calculated appliance of means to ends, or, in other words, of thought to matter, distinguishes make from polish, or true finish from false in all things: and this rule holds good with Art. The more consistent and connected thoughts there are in a picture, the more finish; and *vice versâ*.

Our chapter on Composition deals, in a brief and fragmentary way, with such methods of arrangement and choice of ideas in a painting, as may make all its parts consistent with its main purpose, or, in painters' language, give it unity. And in sketches and studies from Nature, intelligent finish seems to be connected with composition. A tree-trunk, for instance, is the example chosen in 'Modern Painters.' If that is the main object of your picture, or if it is anywhere near its main action, so that the spectator must needs look at it, it must be dwelt on in proportion to its importance in the picture; and, indeed, if it is at all near, it is important enough to be carried on so far that any thoughtful spectator, who has really looked hard at trees, shall be able to find the principal facts of tree-structure about it. The hollow trunk in Millais' *Proscribed Royalist* divides one's attention with the young lady's satin skirt; which skirt, though wonderfully elaborated, is kept in proper subordination by the pretty face and figure in it; though we must say it is hardly a dress for the greenwood<sup>1</sup>. But it does not seem that the picture would be the better for a generalized tree, or an ideal tree, or a typical tree, with a light side and a dark side, and a few conventional grey and green touches about it: and the painter is evidently right in carrying all out strictly, even to the last year's leaves under the girl's feet. In other works which take in a larger horizon, or do not attach special interest to their trees, less labour may no doubt pass.

<sup>1</sup> Probably, however, the idea of the Cavalier's lying perdu close at home is meant to be suggested; the damsel may have left a party incidentally on her kind errand.

The distance from the eye may be greater—then, as the eye would see less, the hand may paint less. In short, the old rule, ‘Paint what you see, and do not paint what you don’t see’ (with the inner or the outer eye), holds good in this as in everything. Or the artist may be tired, or pressed for time, since painters are but men, and perfect leisure for work is as rare a thing as perfect temper in it. In that case, we will take his sketch, or his incomplete picture, for what it is, and give him credit for everything right that is in it: but whatever is in it which is *wrong* must lessen its value. He may leave things blank if he will, or only cover the canvas, but he must not leave things wrong; and he ought to draw them right in the first instance. ‘Tintoret has drawn several large tree-trunks in the two landscapes at the end of the Scuola di San Rocco, with two strokes of his brush; one for the dark, another for the light side: and the large rock at the foot of the picture of the Temptation is painted with a few detached touches of grey over a flat brown ground: but the touches of his tree-trunks have been followed by the mind as they went down with the most painful intensity through their every undulation; and the few grey strokes on the stone are so considered that a better stone could not be painted if we took a month to do it<sup>1</sup>.’

This is Power in Art, such as is gained by the hardest labour of the highest genius. It is the discipline of passion into precision. Towards this all Pre-Raphaelite study ought to lead: to this Turner’s brown ‘Liber

<sup>1</sup> Modern Painters, vol. ii. p. 182.



Studiorum' and grey drawings of all things led him. And the drift of it all is, that if one's work has no visible error, then its incompleteness is not error, but a different thing. It is an important remark that, generally speaking, a certain degree of impetuosity is visible in the works of men of high imagination. This is shewn in Michael Angelo's many unfinished blocks; and by symptoms in some of his finished works it appears that the labour of completion was painful to him towards the end. Tintoret's touch is careful and fine at last, though certain and firm. The finish of Michael Angelo's works, when he did finish, is seen in the Duke Lorenzo, the Madonna of the same chapel, the Bacchus of the Uffizii, and the Pietà of Genoa: and the first and two last, in particular, are matchless examples of power of conception realized in full completion.

But to return to our tree-trunks, and the other incidents and accidents of a picture. When is a tree-trunk finished? We suppose, when you have given everything in it which ought to be visible, at its supposed distance from the eye, and at the supposed hour of the day or night. It may be carried only far enough to pass muster, and intended only for careless inspection, in any given part. In that case the picture is so far forth of less value than one in which the other features are equal to it, and that part is better finished. But if what is done is wrongly done, or if unmeaning polish is put on to look like finish in a deceiving way, then the whole picture is lessened in value, and all suffers together: the unmeaning and mindless work ruins all. But to take the usual

steps of progress. First comes the outline; which as an outline alone may be either broad or fine, according to the distance at which it is to be seen. That states so many facts about the tree. Then the shade is put on, the general half-tint shade, according to the main forms of the trunk: and it asserts and describes a great deal about those forms. With it the outline vanishes, or rather it is merged in and becomes a part of the shade; and is only left on the light side conventionally, to guide the eye in putting in the background: with it are also inserted the sharp cast shadows of other boughs which may cross the upright trunk. The outline makes the following statement to our minds; only it speaks in Art-symbols, which are pretty, just as we write its words down in 'phonetic' or letter-symbols, which are rather ugly:—

'I am the outside line or *limitation* (not the *imitation*) of the form which will be completed, when the shade is put on me, and I am merged in it. I am going to be made into the form of an oak-trunk, I hope. That form will be young or old, rough, sturdy, and wide-spreading, shattered and cloven, or expressive of struggling to hold on—and you may see from me which. It will be large at its base, like a tower standing on a wide foundation, or a spurred pillar, and will increase again in bulk just before it ramifies. When it does so it will break into  $x$  branches: they will spread to  $y$  extent on each side; and there will be leaves, acorns, and little birds on them to the  $n^{\text{th}}$  or to an indefinite extent, as I can't be drawn to express them all.'

The shade takes up its parable, and says—‘*I am* the form of an oak trunk, young, old, rough, sturdy, &c., or shattered, &c. I am rounded by gradations of my depth or force: they will point out further facts about me when the proper lines of drawing are put in. But there are spaces left, on which that young man with the palette evidently means to put light moss; and he has taken a good deal of trouble about my edges, which are ragged in some places and smooth in others, and sometimes straight and sometimes twisted. He seems to know what sort of anatomy I am to have. In this case (the Royalist) I am to have a great hollow in my inside, and there is a blank left in that of the shape of a young man. My number of branches, &c. &c. is  $x$ , &c. &c.; they are darker than the sky behind me, and their high lights are brighter than the ground behind me, but I don’t know how much darker or brighter, because the background and sky are not put in yet.’

To him enter background and sky, and begin to talk about him to us in his presence. ‘This oak is so broad and so dark in colour: those bars and spots upon him (if there are any) are cast shadows: it is a dark day or a sunshiny one. We are soft and blue, white and green, or grey and threatening, and brown: or, if we are all one hue, we do our utmost to indicate degrees of light and space by careful gradation. There is a space left in the middle of us in the shape of a young woman.’ Then the lines and careful surface-drawing on the trunk of the talking oak begin, about his anatomy and his

muscles, and his scars of loss of limbs and bark, and perhaps about his rings of years. Of course in the progress of a finished picture like Mr. Millais' Cavalier, the statements of all the parts have been made more vivid and detailed by the addition of the more powerful language, and countless additional facts of colour. 'The oak is garrulously given, a babbler in the land.' We cannot follow out the innumerable facts which assert themselves when the young lady and cavalier are put in: we have only to do with the question, How far the oak-trunk ought to be finished? Or rather let us say, that, as in this picture, it is completed à l'outrance; and as all its facts are put in, and all put in right, it is probable that other painters ought to do in similar pictures as Mr. Millais has done in this. The absolute completion of a tree-trunk includes texture of bark, anatomy of muscle beneath it, reflected lights in recessed hollows, flickering varieties of cast shadows from foliage above, moss in different masses and lights, varied local colour over all—and all facts about the trunk which can be expressed by the human hand. When that exhaustive statement of them is made, the tree is finished, and cannot be finished any more. It may have to be glazed and scumbled, and brought out and put back, and we know not what: but all this is sacrificing the tree more or less to the general effect of the picture.

From this follows a partial answer to the naturally rather strong exclamations which painters and students may make, on reading what has gone before; to the effect that they cannot be expected



(at all events that it is no use expecting them) to finish all the trees in their pictures up to the same point. First, it may be answered, Anyhow, you ought to be able to finish some of them like this: if you are to paint trees, it will not do to issue any picture of them which may tell the world that you do not know or care about their anatomy, texture of bark, mosses, or reflected lights. Photographs and Pre-Raphaelitism have opened the eyes of the public a little; and people are gradually learning to look at Nature, and see more of what there is on a tree-trunk. The Claudesque symbols, without Claude's knowledge of oil-painting, will not pass now. Harding has taught people what trees are like, and you must at least give what he gives. This would be admitted, or considered as truism, by the greater part of the artistic and critical world. Men may be said, as a rule, to have not only adopted the whole teaching of 'Modern Painters,' but to have succeeded in convincing each other, by sheer vigour of assertion, that they knew it all before. Then secondly, which is the main point, it must be answered, that every one who has real title to the name of a painter, and indeed every one who has taken proper pains in previous studies for his picture, will know perfectly, before he sits down to the final and decisive canvas, that in certain places he must do his very utmost, and that there are parts where he may relax. All works must be unequal in completion, even though done by men of determined character and powerful eyesight, whether their labours look brilliant or laboured in the end. For perfect finish,

like Nature, is entirely beyond human power; and too intense pursuit of it may be too much for man—as has been proved, we think, by some late works of Holman Hunt, and certainly by the example of Mr. Collins, who now, we believe, has almost ceased to paint, finding the toil of such works as *Convent Thoughts*, however beautiful in result, too wearying and exhausting. As we have said, Tintoret will paint his tree-trunks hastily; but he will paint them right, as far as they go, and express his feeling of facts of form which he does not make out: and it does not follow, as all must feel, that Tintoret is to be followed in the accidents of his work, such as being hurried in it, or otherwise prevented from working out his details. He did them gloriously, when he had time. But he had not always time. And the fact that Titian always seems to have had it, and to have painted with a strange severity of power, taken with his patience of well-grounded and entire confidence, seems to make him a better master and example to follow than Tintoret; although the latter, as painter of the *Paradise* in the Doge's Palace, and the *Crucifixion* of the *Scuola di San Rocco*, stands, with Michael Angelo, at the heart and centre of all creative and artistic greatness.

Now, there are what may be called elementary subjects for pictures, such as still life, fruit, and the like, which are proper work for a young artist at certain points of his career. He may, in short, find it advantageous to work at studies which are easily saleable, and which also increase his knowledge and skill. For it is clear that the study of flowers,

and of fruit perhaps still more, is of the greatest use to the colourist; and that the operations of hatching and stippling in colour give an idea of the value of almost imperceptible touches, which can be obtained in hardly any other way. We take for granted that a certain fair amount of skill and knowledge on this subject has already been obtained by practice in sepia. Our first exercise in laying on gradated tints, if carefully repeated a few times (not on different pieces of paper, but successively wash over wash), will give a good idea of the luminousness of plain black or grey properly applied. We will suppose that this has been acquired, and that the student has also learnt to put on touches with tolerable rapidity in the precise form he wants, and to correct all errors and mischances in a flat wash by proper use of hatched lines or stippled dots in light and shade. He has now to use colour in the same way, in its endless complications, and to hatch one hue over another or dot one into another. We can of course do no more than set him to work; but we think the examples given will set him to work in the right way, or at least enable him to begin an useful course of practice, during which he will find right ways of his own.

Our illustration consists of three purple and three green grapes. The uninitiated will, probably, not see much difference in them: but the fact is, that the practical part of this chapter is only meant for rather advanced students, as real fineness of hand and eye is required for it. The purple grapes are numbered 1, 2, 3; the green ones 4, 5, 6. Of

these the original of No. 1 was done by means of washes or coats of colour only; the others were finished by means of hatched lines crossing each other at acute angles. Some of them have been left visible in No. 3. The skilful way in which the plain washes have been laid on and softened in the chromograph have made No. 1 look nearly as well as the others, though about half the time was spent on its original; but the value of well-learned stippling is, that it will bring a far less successful beginning than No. 1 up to a certain perfection. The reader will observe that even these extreme processes are properly called true Finish, because they convey additional ideas of transparency and bloom. Of the green grapes, Nos. 4 and 6 are carried as far as they will go. No. 5 is only hatched with the intersecting lines; but their edges, as a quick eye will observe, produced so good an effect that the artist probably thought it best to leave well alone—a rule which often becomes very valuable in delicate work.

The following is Miss Owen's analysis or log of her drawing. Her general rules are to sit as far from the work as possible, as it saves much useless labour; and also to carry the broader washes or coats of colour as far as they will go, and only use the stipple where it is necessary—as where your tint is slightly unequal, or where you can increase force or transparency by its means. Two brushes are used; they should be long fine red or black sables: the latter are softer, the former more firm. One, the larger, should always be kept clean. We entreat the painter not to do so by sucking his brush; because, in the first place, mixed pigments are





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not good for his health; and in the second, an excitable person is not unlikely to bite the hairy end of the brush off and swallow it; which is more deleterious still.

Begin the purple grapes with the bloom. Brush not too full. Wash a mixed tint of indigo and lake over all the parts on which it is seen. Take No. 1 first and wash the bloom-grey in, in a kind of crescent-shape, leaving the white light free. So also in the others, except that the crescent is broken into by the dark marks where the grape has been rubbed. (These should be left also, but the white *must* be.) Soften all edges at once with the other brush; and make a broad mark of this first tint on the margin of your paper, or another piece, so that you may be able to try the successive tints over each other before you put them on your work. Keep a thick piece of blotting-paper at hand to dry the brush to the right point. In the green grapes, begin with a clear wash of gamboge all over the lights and half-lights, leaving the white paper for the high lights only. Soften as before, leaving the bloomy part untouched, as the dark transparent part is still white paper in the purple specimens. This first wash should be rather in the shape of a *new* moon. Beginners must be very careful not to carry the bloom-colour over the transparent parts: they are apt to think that the first coat does not signify, and to forget that it will be certain to shine through, where nothing except the most transparent tints are to come over it.

One berry of each group may be taken at first for lesson-practice, though it will be generally better to work out all three in one colour first. We have

contrasted the beginnings, and can now complete our groups separately.

*Purple Grapes.*—You have covered the bloom-side of your grape or grapes. Now mix madder carmine with a little gamboge for the transparent crimson crescent on the right-hand edge or dark side. Soften and blend it into the dark purple colour, adding lake and indigo; and not touching the high light. A first-coat always looks poor; but you have now the forms of your washes to guide you, and can lay on a second and a third rapidly enough, as fast as the colour will dry. Never touch twice, right or wrong, until the whole is dry. *Stipple will mend everything, and the least washing-up of under-coats of colour will invariably spoil everything.*

Lay on one coat after another, first of the indigo and lake bloom-tint, then of the madder and gamboge transparent one, till your grape looks dark and rich, and till you have got it to the stage of No. 1. Then, if you want to carry it farther, or if there are any unevennesses in it, or if you enjoy the richness of the stippled texture, begin with the small brush and a little transparent grey in it (indigo and lake or madder carmine). Let the tint be almost imperceptible, and the brush only full enough to draw to a fine point; and cover your grape with intersecting lines, at *acute* angles, now encroaching with most faint and delicate touches on the high light, as in No. 2, or in No. 5 of the green grapes.

This done, if you are satisfied with your work, or rather if it seems unlikely that your present skill can carry it farther, you may leave it and begin another



berry or another group. But if you have the welcome perception that you really can make it better, proceed with the fine point of the brush to fill up all the interstices between your crossing lines, and try to bring all to the transparency of Nos. 2, 4 and 6. Use the transparent tint thus in stipple over the bloom and everywhere, except on the extreme high light; but with the greatest faintness.

*Green Grapes.*—Having laid on pure gamboge for your transparent tint,—gradating it very carefully into the high light with the clean brush, and also towards the bloom-side,—wash on the shade-tints with a grey made of indigo and a very little lake. Gradate towards the lighter side with the clean brush, and let it dry. Your grapes will now look of an unpromising grey and yellow, and be ready for their faint green. This will pass for their bloom-tint where it is laid on the white paper (your light side is yet in that state), and for proper grape-green where it passes over the yellow. The extreme light edge may be left pure yellow, if you wish to express ripeness and transparency. For this green mix cobalt and gamboge, carefully trying the tint over the dashes of yellow, and of yellow and grey, which you have made on your margin. This experimental way of trying one hue over another before putting it on your work will save you much trouble and disappointment. Lay this tint on the bloom-side, sparing the high light and gradating towards the transparent one. The bloom on grapes appears to be a sort of fine down, only visible in the lights; but its tint, if once carried over the transparent part of your picture, would spoil its clearness.

In going a second or third time over the three washes, of gamboge for transparency, indigo and lake for shade, and cobalt and gamboge for bloom and local colour, you will have to vary their strength according to your eye; and it is probable that the yellow-green will need to be enriched a little with burnt sienna. This may be done in a wash, or by hatching and stippling. These processes are to be used in the green grapes as in the purple—with transparent colour, very faintly applied by means of a brush carefully half-dried on blotting-paper.

The background, or a pretty dark tint of it, had better be put in after the grapes are fairly covered with their first entire coat of three different hues. The beginner will be surprised by the telling effect which the first appearance of the background will give his work. That used in our illustration is composed of burnt madder, indigo, and raw sienna. Cobalt may be used instead of indigo, and many capital tones obtained with the four colours, from red or dark yellow to deep green or brown. Gamboge is the best transparent bright yellow. Cadmium and lemon yellows are only half-transparent; the chromes all fade; and yellow madder is too red and powerful, though in other respects and for other purposes it is one of the most serviceable and beautiful of colours.

Other sets of tints may of course be used, as smalt and ultramarine in the bloom-tints of purple grapes, and emerald or malachite green, perhaps, in others. But the colours we have named will do well enough to begin with and for all students' practice, and it is well to learn how much brilliancy can be got out of simple colours.

The Finish of a landscape, and in some degree of other pictures, has been treated in theory in the last few pages. It is also considered at the end of the analysis of our frontispiece. The use of body-colour in finishing is justifiable enough of course; but we think the student ought to be able to do without it, and for the most part, the artist too: though mixing a little white in his colours to give bloom to his work is always fair. Body-colour is best used on grey or coloured paper; and remarks on grey paper sketching will be found a little further on.

## II.

## COPYING.

(Especially in Body-colour from Turner's Sketches on Grey Paper.)

ONE object of the preceding pages has been to reduce the amount of absolute Copying which the student will have to go through. Those who are sufficiently advanced in their work to make tolerable studies from Nature will find it of great use to them to make studies of parts of great pictures, so as to learn definite lessons of drawing and colour from them : but, as has been said or implied before, it is not worth the time or labour to copy a whole picture. To do it ill or indifferently is not worth the time and labour which are misspent in painful effort. To copy a whole picture well, requires power and effort which might be better employed. For instance, a careful student may study the wreath round the little faun's head in Nicolas Poussin's *Dance of Satyrs*, in the National Gallery, with advantage ; hardly with success until he has got pretty far ; but to elaborate the whole picture would require science something like Poussin's own. The best rule for copying is, we think, to make partial studies of interesting or useful parts of pictures, always for the sake of the labour, and of what is learnt by it, rather than for the result. Any one who has tried will remember how the interest and value of a good picture



seems to double in the eye of a careful copyist; so that some attempt at imitation is almost a necessity for any one who would really understand it. It is very easy to look at and to admire Titian's flesh-tint; but a serious attempt to copy a hand and a bracelet, or a Doge's sleeve, from one of his portraits, will give the best idea of his consummate power which can be obtained. Studies of this kind are of great value to all painters; but there is a way of studying a master without actual copying, which is especially well suited to landscape artists. It is Turner's system; and seems to consist in imitating a master's treatment in colour, tone, and choice of effect, in *parallel* pictures (so to speak) from one's own stock of sketches or ideas. Turner never (perhaps) copied any one; but he would choose subjects like those of Claude or Vandervelde, and paint pictures of his own in their manner till he had exhausted all which was to be learnt from them. This is of course a method of study which can hardly be carried out except by a highly trained workman who has mastered a technical system of painting, and can rely on his own precision in using the instruments of his craft. But even more than technical skill is required to practise this system. A powerful and well-stored memory is absolutely necessary for it; as well as that grasp of the student's own subject (or felicity in choosing it) which may enable him to learn from his master in doing his own work, and to produce a really original picture, as to facts, which is also a study from a master as to treatment. It is perfectly true that Turner's emulative imitation of Claude did him no good, and only held him back for a time from pursuing Nature

his own way on the Yorkshire moors and on the rivers of France. But any one who will take up and try to imitate one or two of the simpler grey-paper drawings of Turner's hand, in his own style, will soon find himself learning fact after fact about Nature, and making step after step in skill of rendering her. The University of Oxford is particularly fortunate in possessing a progressive set of specimens of Turner's work, which has been selected for the use of students of landscape by the munificent donor, Mr. Ruskin. The pecuniary value of such a present is very large; but its greatest value will not be felt till the study of Art is fairly recognized in Oxford, and these drawings are carefully analyzed and lectured upon as standard works: for such in pure landscape they undoubtedly are. In common with the Rafael drawings, they form one of the most instructive galleries in England: and now that they have been so admirably re-arranged for the benefit of the student, we may hope that some real progress in Art-study may be made in the University.

The Turner sketches and incomplete drawings lead us to anticipate a few remarks which will have to be made about them in our chapter on Sketching from Nature, and to dwell a little on the word 'sketching.' There is a use and a misuse for every term in Art, or in anything else: and this participial substantive is no exception to the rule. We have said that Amateur Art is not inaccurate Art, but incomplete Art; and we state much the same thing in other words, when we say that sketching is not drawing a whole thing carelessly and hastily, but drawing the most important parts of a thing very attentively. This is specially illustrated by

Turner's grey-paper works. Many of them seem to have been done on the spot. But the first thing in them which strikes any one who is practised in careful drawing is their precision and accuracy, rather than their speed or power. Ordinary observers are vaguely impressed by the latter, because they feel themselves at once unable to understand how the work was done. But when one begins to see how the work was done, one observes, with grievous discouragement to one's hopes as a copyist, that almost every touch is the result of an unknown quantity of previous knowledge and practice. The first steps or processes are often clear enough. Turner mixed his sky-blue or his storm-grey, taking a little white with his cobalt and light or Indian red. Or, if he had yellowish light to express, and wanted to warm his cool grey paper, he washed (probably) brown madder and white over it. Thus he laid on a set of ground-tints, with such quick suggestions of and preparations for forms to come, as his years of labour made easy to him. Copying will enable many, or all, to understand them, but very few will be able to imitate them. Then he took up his pen and filled it with liquid brown, and with it drew in all the forms he wanted, great and small; rapidly, accurately, mysteriously, in touches which told sometimes as outline, sometimes as parts or spots of shade, irregular-looking enough till the colour came on; when they told as transparent shadow of the deepest tone and sharpest form. By this drawing in pen and ink over the ground-tints Turner secured a framework or skeleton to clothe with colour; and the colour was put on in accurate and suitable forms, with no allowance

for accident or variation from the well-considered first intention. Or if the colour was put on without ink-drawing under, it was put on in definite forms. If it was green it was put on in the form of trees or bushes, or patches, or sweeps of grassy ground; if it was grey it went on as rock or cloud, or what not, in definite form. This is the great object of copying from Turner in his simpler works; for where he really brings out the stores of his knowledge of Nature, it is almost impossible to copy him. The actual result, the copy one has made, is not successful, it hardly can be so: but the lessons one has gained in form and colour, and the building up and ruin of hills, and the growth and accidents of trees, and the form and rhythmic order of clouds, ought to be a regular step in advance on one's own course of study.

The reason why neither Turner nor any other very great workman can be successfully copied is that rapid touches such as his, coming instantly from his brain to the paper or canvas, and laid on with all his workman's power of touch, cannot be imitated slowly, by mere attention and accuracy. It is so even in bare line. It is a matter of great difficulty at least, even with the use of the finest tracing-paper, pencils, or pens, to facsimile any involved lines in the 'Liber Studiorum' plates. What they express may be stated in line, so to speak, with sufficient exactness; but the freedom, the artful hesitation and play of the touch are not to be imitated. It is the old story about the fiddle and the fiddlestick. Eloquence and force, moral and mental, are not transferable qualities: and eloquence expressed by form and colour is precisely the same



undefinable quality as eloquence of words, manners, and gesture. It is the personal gift of the individual man; rightly called inspiration, in some minor sense of the word, simply because it is God's gift to him from the beginning, however wisely and hard he may have worked to improve it. Any amount of instruction or enjoyment may be gained from the results of another man's inspiration; the mental gain of true appreciation is incalculable; but you cannot take another man's gift direct from him and make it your own. To read a man's speech attentively, to take note of its graces, to get up its matter, meaning, and purpose, to judge wisely, and in fact lovingly, of its truth and wisdom,—all this is quite possible: and a good copyist will do all this with the easier works of Titian or Turner. But nobody except Titian or Turner could repeat the works; and they were not men to repeat themselves.

With Turner, the great thing seems to be, first to pass a fair space of time in studying, and trying to imitate, those expressive and designed touches of his which look accidental, and are all planned form; then to treat his picture as if it were a book on natural history, and to try to verify its words in his Book of Reference. You have learnt, perhaps, to see Nature in Turner (many people decline taking the trouble). Then go out into the fields or woods, or wherever you can find a subject like some of his, and see if you can find Turner in Nature. Study him and verify him. Everybody has some idea of the flaming sunsets and chill bright dawns, and cataclysms of rain, and breathing heat of noon, which

he set forth over and over again with ever-varied repetition. Everybody has sun and cloud and rain to look at, and may learn to look at them with the eyes of the Observer and Imitator.

Our second chapter deals with copying from the antique as a means of study; and of course it is not in itself a very lofty end. Any one who can really imitate a work worth copying, with success, must have power or skill which would be better employed in working direct from Nature, or in expressing thoughts of his own. Yet the function of the copyist would be an important one in Art if it were properly understood and rightly patronised. It is of no small importance that works like those of the Arundel Society should be published, which give a good notion, as far as they can go, of the frescoes of Giotto and Ghirlandajo. The thoughts and the handiwork of men whom every painter honours in his heart are fast passing out of existence in the cities of Italy, and paintings of great historical value fare no better than the buildings which contain them. Many works of Tintoret in Venice are quite unknown and uninterpreted in England, e.g. all those in the church of S. Rocco. The great Last Judgment in the Madonna dell' Orto, and the Golden Calf in the same church, are known by name and by the description in 'Modern Painters;' but we should not like to enquire into the number of educated English visitors who never find their way to a point so far from S. Mark's. Some better way than engraving might be found of preserving such record, as is now possible, of these great

works. Careful chalk or charcoal drawings well photographed would be of great value, and this country would have great cause to thank any good draughtsman who would labour on them: not to mention that he would gain such training, in following Tintoret's work, as would greatly develop all the powers he possessed of his own.

Pencil sketches and partially coloured studies, etchings and light-and-shade drawings, such as the contents of the Rafael Gallery at Oxford, are the real subjects for a student to copy; and, as has been said, the educational worth of such collections is a most important addition to their intrinsic value. They are the notes, and first thoughts, and tentative efforts of great masters, and shew all their favourite processes in rapid work. Especially they shew how great was the knowledge of form, the inventiveness of mind and precision of hand, which seems to have made them prefer hard-pointed pencil, or pen-and-ink drawing, and even the use of a steel or other especially sharp point on prepared paper. Learners can understand and appreciate the master's skill only when they see his processes from the beginning: and few moral lessons in Art are worth more, to one who is impatient in mind and hurried in touch, than long contemplation and careful copying of some of Rafael's partly shaded drawings in pen and ink. There is something in those exact and easy hatchings and crossed lines which gives one a feeling of the precision of the graver and the freedom of the brush in one. Rafael's sketches also give important lessons in delicate economy of shade.

A study of a figure or limb by his hand, ever so carefully elaborated in form, and quite rounded into projection, has hardly a dark touch in it, and would tell in a picture as a mass of light. This is particularly instructive in these days of unmitigated ink, when Gustave Doré paints all abomination in its true tints of blackness. It is not our business here to say anything of this artist's works, or to enquire into the causes of his great popularity: nor are we inclined to dispute or diminish from his great and evil genius. But it must be said, that whatever power his pictures possess, they contain everything which we should wish our student to avoid.

The chapter on Composition contains various references to Turner's sketches and drawings, and most persons will be able to verify one or more of them. We do not know that it is desirable to give a young landscape painter too many to look at at once. If he will take any of the annexed list of 'Liber Studiorum' plates which he fancies, and try to exhaust it thoroughly, by careful copying first in line, then *repeatedly* in light and shade, he will find himself fast gaining strength enough for real sketching from Nature<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ruskin's list of the best plates for study in the 'Liber Studiorum' is as follows:—

Grande Chartreuse.	Calais Pier.	Hedging and ditching.
Æsacus and Hesperie.	Pembury Mill.	Dumblane Abbey.
Cephalus and Procris.	Little Devil's Bridge.	Morpeth.
Source of Arveiron.	Holy Island.	Alps from Grenoble.
Ben Arthur.	Clyde.	Raglan.
Watermill.	Lanffenbourg.	
Hind-head Hill.	Blair Athol.	



We take the liberty of adding to these Rizpah and the Mer-de-Glace, for reasons which will be given in our descriptions, and because they are perhaps the most important of all in one great respect. They shew any plain person what impressive power is in landscape painting, and how great its appeal to passion, feeling, and thought may be. The Sensualist or late Renaissance School, which is fast rising at the present day, with evil omen for Art, appeals to impure emotions of various kinds and shades, simply for the sake of power; and adopts M. Taine's philosophical criticism, which extols the artistic power of Impurity, in the days of the Renaissance. Such plates as these two, or Cephelus and Procris, arouse all the nobler forms of those passions which are now appealed to in their corruptness by images of sensuality and cruelty.

A few remarks are left for us to make on the subject of Body-colour. It may best be studied from the works of three men, specimens of which are accessible to most students: from Turner's works on grey, from Mr. Lewis's (which are generally on warm-tinted paper, suited to his favourite Eastern or Spanish subjects), and from the drawings of the late W. Hunt. It is of course necessary to use body-colour, in the mere sense of mixing white with one's colours, whenever the tints have to be laid on coloured paper, as otherwise the ground-colour destroys the transparent hues. And most artists mix white with their sky, cloud, and distance colours in landscape painting with great advantage, as it gives bloom and aërial effect. But body-colour

is an intermediate stage of painting between water-colour and oils; and we had rather our student should take pure water-colour and regular oil-painting one at a time. Oil-painting is the converse of water-colour in its operations, as has been said, inasmuch as the lights are laid on thickly and the shadows left in transparent under-colour. In body-colour work, one is prepared for oil practice, and learns how to combine transparent and opaque hues: besides, in following Turner's carefully designed touches as we have described, a habit is formed of always seeking to express character, and give significant form to every touch or group of touches one puts on; and, as we have always held, that habit is the foundation of all original painting. In short, a rather advanced water-colourist will do well to use body-colour as we have suggested, and glide from its use into that of oil by slow degrees. But our principle in water-colour is to rely only on 'left' forms; designed by the mind and drawn by the brush: and to hew forms gradually out, with preconceived purpose, leaving nothing to accident, or 'taking out' or painting over with opaque colour. All that may do for a master of water-colour; though our ideal water-colourist will be able to do without it: and Turner always did without it, on white paper. As a learner, one should hold by pure water-colour, and never lose semi-transparency, at most;—making no allowance for change of purpose or for alteration. Indeed, the great temptation of body-colour is that one is apt to think that anything may be changed or concealed by it. And it ought not to be used for that

purpose by any student; because colours are put into his hands that he may draw forms rightly; and he ought not to think of hiding his mistakes by thick plasters of Chinese white. A few points to his leaves with cadmium and white; some fringes of foreground grass, or draggings and hatchings to give texture to his rocks and stones, or some good mist and cloud forms rapidly swept over a dark distance, are excusable: but in some of these a slight touch of oil-colour for the bright points will generally do better. In fact, for real study of real form, we recommend body-colour: it is necessary if we are to follow Turner, Hunt, and Lewis, as every painter ought to follow them. But it was meant to be used skilfully and not unskilfully: a man should be something of a workman before he deals with it: and for mending and altering we object to it altogether<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Our views about the selection of masters for the student are expressed at the end of the Historical Sketches in Part I.

## CHAPTER V.

## FIRST LESSONS IN OIL-PAINTING.

WE have treated the study of Water-colour in this manual rather as a preliminary to that of Oil-painting, than as an end in itself. This is simply because the latter is on the whole a more powerful means of expressing one's ideas, or realizing natural objects, than the former. It is impossible to say which is easier and which the more difficult, —indeed, what we have just said about the comparative power of the two vehicles of painting may be disputed; and those who have opportunities of seeing the water-colours of Mr. Lewis, or of Mr. Burne Jones, will not be likely to let it pass uncontradicted. And the modern English Landscape School, which is undoubtedly the central one in the world, and may be said to be, at present, the most progressive branch of Art in existence, owes everything to water-colour. Water-colour, again, has gained from Pre-Raphaelitism. It is useless to insist on the admitted imperfections of a system which encourages rapid sketching, and even admits of considerable slightness and thinness in finished works. It is clear that modern out-door drawings in water-colour have enormously increased and popularized



the knowledge of Nature; and that they prove how intimate is the connexion between Nature and Art, between the well-stored memory of the painter and the speed and precision of his hand in his various processes. But this great importance of water-colour sketching and study from Nature is one reason why water-colour should be a preliminary to oils: since the slighter and more rapid work should come first to store and enrich the memory: for water-colour information, so to speak, is always useful and valuable for oil-painting, while skill in oil is less available with water. It will hardly be disputed that people should begin with what they learn most from in the easiest way. In landscape, there can be no doubt that water-colour is this easier way; though in strong hands it may well be that it is the more powerful way also. Turner's water-colours of eighteen inches by twelve, give ideas of power which even he never surpassed in oil: but it would be very rash in any student to refuse attention to oil in the hope of emulating such works as *Llanthony*, or *Goldau*, or the *S. Gothard*. Indeed, Turner's extraordinary power with solid or opaque colour could hardly have been matured without the help of his vast practice in oil. There is no doubt that any one who labours on exact principles, faithfully meaning and wishing to be able to realize as far as he can, will find that he can realize further in oil than by other means: we say further, because the power of oil-colour carries the impression further by sheer force of propulsion. Oil and varnish impress colour on the eye far more strongly than water, unless it be in fresco. The shiny or apparently

wet surface enhances colour in a very powerful way, which we cannot now stop to account for. It is enough to say here, that all our training must be in the direction of clearness and realization, and the vehicle which realizes with the greatest clearness must go first. A great painter may refuse us clearness in his work, give us obscurity in its proper place; or he may deny us realization for good reasons of his own. But it will never be because he has not learned to make his smaller forms out decisively, or draw his larger ones clearly. We try to educate pupils to do things and not to leave them out, to finish to the utmost by adding truths in detail. When they are able to do this, we must needs leave it to them to use their science, in sure hope that they will not resign the universally understood power which accuracy infallibly gives every one who possesses and can shew it.

But oil-painting has this further advantage, that its results, if fairly treated, will last almost for ever, and in many respects gain from the touch of Time. This, it is true, does not make them more valuable as works of Art once completed: but it has a tendency to make the young artist, at least, more careful in an oil-picture; and so to give himself a better chance of real success. Generally speaking, men work at fuller stretch of their powers in oil than in water-colour. They take more time, they are more certain and deliberate with their processes; they are less liable to be distracted with accidental results, good or bad. As to the difficulty of real success, both vehicles are about even. Our early lessons will have

given a student some idea of the difficulty of a large flat wash of water-colour, properly gradated. The method of the late W. Turner is there given as he taught it to all his pupils; and many of his works bear witness to its excellence. But all his pupils will remember how he, the coolest, most subtle and methodical of extensive-landscape painters, constantly found accidents, of materials and the like, interfere with his work; and how often it had to be repeated even when successful, till his first pale purples and faint yellows deepened and brightened into transparent luminous-perspective. His skies and distances had a delicacy and power which is scarcely attainable in oil-work, from the shininess of surface which it always involves more or less: but such gain of power would not make up, in most men's eyes, for the additional command of depth and brightness gained in oil throughout the rest of a picture. The common notion that 'oil-colour is easier than water-colour, because you can alter anything you like,' deserves as much clipping and turning as common notions generally do. Of course it is easy to smear anything out; and it is an advantage to be able to do so without spoiling one's ground, so as to be ready for a new attempt. But in as far as the possibilities of patching and mending tempt the student to begin any work before he really knows what he is going to do—so far the practice of oil will be found dangerous to him, and is wrong for him. It does not follow that because you have great advantages for rubbing out a thing when it is wrong, you will

therefore be able to paint it in again right. The real advantages of oil in the matter of alteration will be considered. They are very great in landscape especially, as any impression of coloured light may be given by transparent glazing, and any idea of mist or aërial perspective easily conveyed by scumbling with solid colour. In oil-colour, as in all good work whatever, the effort should always be to do the thing rightly at first, striking it off once and for all. There must always be long preparation in the way of thought, and acquisition of knowledge: there must be sufficient technical knowledge of processes and materials. Studies of parts or of the whole of a work may be made beforehand, if it be necessary: in fact, the painter ought to have been collecting materials for his picture long before he begins it, and to have thought over its treatment enough to be able to see his way through it. Having done such justice to his subject in preparation, he will want no more than correct outlines to guide him when he brings it to canvas; and will be able to paint things in with a full mind and a full brush.

Of course there is a difference between altering an idea or thought, so as to make it necessary to insert or leave out a figure or detail, and altering and patching to mend mistakes in drawing or colour. But the conception of a picture should be as little altered as possible in any case, and that is a greater work *cæteris paribus* which clings more closely to its original design.

Every one knows the virtue of quick touches; though the number of those who feel the difference between



quick touches right and quick touches wrong is unfortunately much smaller. And the advantage of oil, as we see it, seems to be that it involves more careful preparation and better previous instruction than water-colour, as the trouble of preparation is greater; also, that it allows less excuse for slight work. It was noticed at a late water-colour exhibition, that the drawings which were sent there by professed oil-painters were on the whole superior to those by professed water-colourists. The reason was of course that oil-painting is more 'professional,' and implies more complete training (for the most part) than water-'drawing:' and this is reason enough for taking water-colour as the preliminary, in a treatise for the use of not very far advanced students.

In point of fact, it is as much more difficult to use oil, as it is more difficult to get a clean line, exact form, and minute pointed touch with a hoghair brush than with a fine sable. Fine brushes may of course be used in oil-colour, even with turpentine and colour, as if with water. But the effect of such touches in finishing will depend almost absolutely on the broader work which has gone before. And through all the process, from the charcoal outline to the last touches which force out the foreground into relief, the advantage or the want of elementary training in form will assuredly make itself felt. We have drawn no line as to the time which must be given to elementary drawing in the first instance; but there are few artists who do not find much advantage in returning to it at intervals, either in the way of life-study or drawing from the cast. But the excitement which must seize on all

ordinary persons as soon as they begin to see their ideas partly realized and actually coming into existence in a picture is both real and trying : and the number of minor ideas and processes which contribute to make up the general effect is very large and confusing : and the difference will soon be felt between the well-trained eye and mind, which virtually sees every form before the hand has put it on the canvas, and the uncertain half-trained touches which prove that the mind has not really settled what it means the hand to do, but has trusted to the chapter of accidents, and is letting the hand wander in hope of a suggestive blot. There is probably only one recorded example in ancient Art which is faithfully followed by our rapid performers at the present day ; it is Protogenes' painting the foam. Many a brush is dashed unmeaningly against paper or canvas in the desperate hope of getting something out of nothing—some suggestive form to help the idle eye or exhausted invention. Time and thought, careful studies beforehand, and the determination, methodically carried out, never to put on an unmeaning form, or use a glaze or a scumble<sup>1</sup> without a reason : these things will enable a man to do his best, and improve that best with every picture.

But it is time to set our student to work. We have given him a training in light and shade, and some information about colours, as used with water ; and some practice in using them in still-life objects. If he has not hitherto used oil-brushes or colour,

<sup>1</sup> To glaze is to rub a coat of transparent colour, mixed with medium, over your canvas ; to scumble is to use partly opaque colours and white, in the same way.

he had better copy some easy cast in monochrome, as follows, to get used to the tools. Let him get a correct outline in chalk on a mill-board or prepared block; and fix it with a small brush and turpentine: then let him go over the whole surface with a thin glaze of raw umber and cobalt, with a little white and medium, which will have the effect of brown transparent shadow: then let him paint into that glaze all his half-tints of light, in flake white and umber, blending it into the transparent shade. He may then put on his high lights and, if necessary, reinforce his shades a little with transparent colour; but it will be safest to let the first painting dry, then to glaze it again all over with transparent shade; and then paint in the lights somewhat higher a second time. Two or three coatings thus put on will accustom the pupil to the use of the tools; which differs from water-colour mainly in this, that the point of the brush is but little used, the colour being *laid* sideways for the most part, as in charcoal drawing. We will begin a landscape with him: postulating for him that it shall be from a sketch of his own, or at least that he has seen the subject, and has a sketch of it before him; that he shall have thought it over carefully, and indeed made studies of important parts; and that he shall have before him a warm whitish canvas on an easel in a good north light, if possible; at all events with the main light coming from above.

Then let him consider the amount of time and patience he has at his disposal, which will depend greatly on the interest he takes in his subject.

If he feels strong enough to try to elaborate it thoroughly, by a regular first, second, and third painting, he may proceed at once on his canvas, prepared as it is by the colourman. But if he has only time for one painting, or is only making an oil-sketch, it will be best to 'prime' his canvas with an extra-thick coat of warm white. It will give him good texture to work on—just as important a matter in oils as in water-colour—and it will prevent the colours sinking into the canvas when drying, and make them bear out as brightly as on paper. In this case proceed as follows :—

Mix a little cadmium or yellow ochre, and pink madder, with a great deal of flake white, and two or more drops of turpentine, in proportion to the size of the canvas. The more turpentine the faster all dries : it will probably be best to use as much as will leave the coat of 'priming' soft enough to be smoothed nicely with the handkerchief. Use no megilp where the sky is to come, or anywhere unless you want shininess of surface ; to which we ourselves strongly object, except in calm water, &c. If you have rich sunset or bright autumn tints in your mind, make your mixture, or part of it, warmer and brighter : in any case the result should be a warm white, light yellow or pinkish. It depends on your full knowledge of what you mean to do, whether you should give any forms in grounding a picture thus. Much may be done by using transparent shade over a warm ground, or by painting local colour and detail over a ground of light ; and *vice versâ* by painting into heavy ground-shade. All depends on your hold of your facts. In all early work, abide



strenuously by your first intention, I may say right or wrong. 'Error (or imperfect arrangement) persevered in becomes success.' Prepare enough warm white to cover your canvas, and paint it thickly on with a hoghair brush.

This done, take a clean fine napkin or old pocket-handkerchief, and fold it lightly together, corners inwards, into a baggy shape, loose but smooth (something like the 'balls' or dabbers which are used to apply the ink to the types in a printing-press). Then beat the coat of warm white with very light repeated blows over its whole surface till it is perfectly even and equal all over. The lighter the strokes the finer the texture, but a certain amount of roughness where sky and distance are to come will do rather good than harm.

When this coat is quite dry, and your outline is drawn on it in charcoal lines which fully express to your understanding all the principal forms and shades of your picture, take a small sable with a little turpentine, blow away nearly all your charcoal, and fix the lines by passing the brush over them. We like to draw our distances in with smalt and turpentine, and our foregrounds or strong lights with scarlet madder or yellow. Have by you a study or etching of principal lines, on which you can rely when your outline is lost as the coatings of colour are laid on.

It is useless to begin before you have settled finally what and how much space shall be covered by your broader shadows, and consequently where your main lights are to come.

The main processes in an oil-picture, especially in landscape, seem to be expressible thus in the shortest way.

Lay on

1. Middle tint of shade (transparent).
2. Middle tint of light (opaque), and blend by painting over while wet.
3. 'Paint up' your lights as bright as you please, or as you can; not by use of violent tints, but in grammatical light and shade. Sharp opaque touches.
4. Brighten all by putting in the reserved strong darks. Turner's cypresses, or the figures in Rogers' 'Poems' and 'Italy,' are wonderful examples of reserved force and its use. Sharp transparent touches.

Of course when the picture is dry, between any of these steps you can draw forms in, to guide your further operations, with white or other chalk. You ought to have a study at hand of *how you mean to treat your subject*, as well as a sketch in line or light and shade of the *facts of the subject you mean to treat*<sup>1</sup>. Let the

<sup>1</sup> Colours to be arranged on your palette, say in this order :—

Megilp	} (these in larger quantity).
Flake white	

As also—

Cobalt*.	Light red.
Ultramarine ash.	Vandyke brown (enough).
Smalt.	Yellow ochre.
Antwerp blue (a very little).	Raw sienna.
Brown madder (enough).	Gamboge.
Purple madder (enough).	Burnt sienna.
Rose madder.	Emerald green.

Have a little turpentine by you; and use rather large flat hoghair brushes at first; red sables afterwards.

\* Ultramarine ash is often preferable to cobalt, unless a very definite blue (as of blue sky) is wanted. It produces beautiful *green-greys*.

sky and distance alone for the present. When your mind is made up, first rub some megilp medium, with a little transparent brown colour, umber, madder, or what you will in it, over all the shadow-space; then paint or rub your broad shadows over the whole space they are to cover, disregarding everything except their outer forms or the lights you mean to leave within them. For pure light and shade use brown madder and cobalt mixed up with enough white to give consistency, yet not enough for opacity. Rub it on thinly and lay it as evenly as possible: if it lies too thickly where the full brush first touched, or elsewhere, take a clean one and spread it till you have a transparent coat of shade wherever you want it. Remember this rule throughout your work, 'Transparent shades and solid lights.' Also, 'No megilp to be used in sky or extreme distance.' You can thin your tint with turpentine. For storm-shadows use light red and cobalt, with white; deepen with black if you will: or on deep mountain-shades with purple madder, or on sea-surface with Antwerp blue, both in the smallest quantities. They have a very beautiful effect in moderation, and a thoroughly destructive one in excess. Vandyke brown is the best of all ground-shadows for the nearest parts of a picture.

Your canvas is now half-covered, and sufficiently dolorous in its appearance. Look well at your study and line-sketch: consider what pitch of shade you have now put on, that is to say, how many degrees of light and shade above or below it you want to have in your picture. You ought to have quite settled what scale of light and shade, or, as painters

say, what tone, you mean to have throughout your picture. We call a dark picture deep-toned, if there be sufficient gradation in its darkness; for darkness and depth are very different things. We call a bright picture clear-toned, or light in tone, if it consist principally of masses of well-gradated light, with only a few strong darks used to get brightness by contrast. According as you economize the darks or force them, or, in other words, as you work by gradations of light or gradations of darkness, you will be following the system of Rembrandt or that of Turner (for which see p. 249), and the general effect of your picture will be deep or luminous accordingly. Much may be done by after-glazings or scumblings to deepen or lighten the general pitch of shade: but of course it is far better to be right, or nearly right, at first. So now mix a middle tint for your lights, that is to say, one which shall stand in bright relief against your shades, yet admit of blending with them; and which shall be dark enough to leave you the power of putting on high lights with telling effect towards the close of your labours. Always keep a good reserve of force both in light and shade for the end of the work, so as to 'come with a rush' in finishing the picture. Before beginning to paint any form on a dry canvas or painting, it is *almost always* necessary to rub on some megilp, tinted with transparent colour (as brown madder), to paint into: clean forms are impossible without it. This must be the first thing done on the canvas in every day's painting.



*Extreme distance. Effect of light.*

Pink or yellowish light (as cumulus clouds in evening or morning sunshine, or distant hills where local colour is merged in light):

Mix { rose or pink madder predominating,  
with a little cobalt or ultramarine-ash, and  
white.

You may add, or glaze afterwards with, a little raw sienna, without megilp; turpentine may be used instead.

Detail afterwards, with  
rose madder and ultramarine ash, or  
smalt pure, or with white.

Clear shadows in extreme distance (telling as light in the whole tone of the picture):

Mix { ultramarine ash or cobalt predominating,  
rose madder,  
the least possible amount of yellow ochre,  
white.

Detail with ultramarine ash or smalt, and white.

White is to be used with everything in distance, and medium to be banished entirely, if possible.

As to glowing or coloured light, it may be glazed on afterwards to your heart's content with more forcible colours. Cadmium and the chromes, malachite, chromium and emerald greens; cerulium and ultramarine, extract of vermilion, carmine and all the brighter madders—excellent colours all—are meant for masters rather than for pupils. But if you have laid your ground with provident foreknowledge of your subject,

the effect will be likely to be one not to be sacrificed for the sake of florid colour. Subdued and mysterious glow, like some of Linnell's work, is the best aim of a young landscape colourist: and it is best obtained by having the glow under, painting over, and so toning it down, with mysterious detail and distant shadow.

Those who have access to any of Turner's simpler works on grey paper will find it of the greatest use to make one or two very careful copies or studies from them before beginning oil-colour. His process seems to have been almost the same as that which is regularly taught to students of oil-painting in our National Art-Schools. First came his middle tints of shade, all the darker masses of his composition, painted on at great speed, but with an attention to form which shews how thoroughly *premeditated* the whole work was in his mind. These masses of shade came first, done in nearly transparent body-colour, with just enough white in it to make the tints bear out from the grey paper. Then he went over the whole with pen and colour, marking in forms of detail and accenting the corners, outlines, and small deep darks of his whole picture. Then he took up his lights in thick body-colour with extraordinary attention to form, putting on the light sides of a whole forest of trees, for instance, and leaving the grey of the paper to stand for their shaded side. Then he settled his highest lights, and gradated everything up to them: then he put in figures or near objects which threw everything into aërial distance, and often furnished one or two touches of bright local colour: and then came a cypress or plough, or

some broad form and shadow, which threw everything somehow into its place.

Page 349 will contain a list of a few middle-distance tints, which will serve in foreground, if you keep the shades dark and transparent, in Vandyke brown, and if your lights are well defined and solid.

Your canvas is now fairly covered with what amounts to a rather advanced 'first painting.' It may now be left to dry thoroughly, for two or three days. Meanwhile, it will be best to look well at old sketches, photographs, or anything which refreshes your memory or stimulates your thoughts about the scene you are working at. Your mind has done with the composition of its picture, and must now take in a store of minor facts for detail. So if you have a hill-side covered with trees in your picture, store your mind with tree-forms from a photograph, or from Nature, or go and study one of Turner's forests: the same of course with rocks or clouds, or what you will. You must now settle (unalterably, if possible, which is not often the case) what your foreground shall be, whether you will have incidents or figures, or leave the scene to itself. On this last matter the plain truth is that a landscape student had better let figures alone till he can paint them. Still, turf-carts on a moor, white jackets and blue petticoats, with red faces and legs, are admissible—though I should prefer a few grouse basking among sand; or a fox or wild cat. Eagles and red deer have become conventional, and so I regret to say have herons; so if drawn they must be well drawn. In Swiss scenery, well studied flowers, such as Alpine

roses on the lower ground, and gentians higher up, are better than any attempt at figures. Of course in either Scottish or Swiss landscape, if you can put in a brown bull, with lights to mark the weather-bleached curls of yellow shagginess on his thick neck and shoulders; and if you have feeling enough to call attention to his short forelegs, and horns, his wild eye, and nostril of scorn—especially if you have a sketch of your own which reminds you somewhat of such points—he will do credit to a place in or near your foreground. But in proportion as you feel weaker, you must put him farther off. The eternal camel cannot be kept out of an Eastern scene, if it be in Egypt or the Desert (he is not wanted in Syria, but no one has courage to omit him)—and he is easy to draw, as his characteristic points are so strongly marked. Lewis's are best of all as models. In any case, while your first painting is dry, draw from detail your forms upon it in chalk, black or white. You can try the effect of figures or animals, &c., by cutting out paper 'silhouettes' of their form and general tint of colour, and sticking them on the picture for a while; or use soft coloured chalks.

You will now go over your picture again with higher lights and brighter colours: though the object is not so much to raise part or the whole of the picture to intense brightness, as to have plenty of true gradations between your lightest and your darkest. And here you will find previous water-colour training of great value, for your object now is sharp form: varied and delicate it ought to be also, but keen and decisive it *must* be. The object of all the school



and book training you have gone through, and also of all your out-door sketching, has been to enable you to remember the natural forms you want, to know them correctly at the needful time, to anticipate and see your way through every process and touch in representing them. Think well therefore over every form, make good use of your chalk outlines, and then paint your forms in steadily, yet with quick touches. The dark transparent colours had better go on first, all over the given form<sup>1</sup>. In the brown bull, for instance, you would paint him all over quite flat with Vandyke brown; then you would take yellow, white and red, and paint his lights over; finally purple or black, and put the last few dark touches, which ought to be the most forcible and expressive of all. And if he were white, part of him would still be in shade, and the whole ought first to be painted in the more or less transparent grey, of the darkest shade, and then to be brought out by thick, well-defined touches on muscles and locks of hair drawn sharply in warmer or cooler white. So with rocks or massed trees in middle-distance: paint in the light sides on the ground-shade with the greatest effort at sharp form, and a few darks will complete all necessary detail. With the water-colour foreground you were advised to put on your lightest and brightest pink first, all over your mass of heather, let us say; and then to hew the form out of it with the darker colours of the stems and leaves. With oil you will find it best to put on first the general coat of transparent dark<sup>1</sup>, and paint on the

<sup>1</sup> See footnote, however, p. 349.

light forms, thick and bright; lighter perhaps than you want them, to allow for after glazing. Last of all put in the reserved darks with all their force; let them be perfectly transparent, and decisive in form. 'Full of meaning' is the highest praise of all, for the picture as a whole and for all parts of it, and every one of the last darks ought to speak, as it were. And if the lights are sharply touched, and there is right and grammatical gradation, the whole canvas will kindle and expand as the strong darks throw distance back on distance.

As to Finish, enough was said of it in the chapter on Water-colour. As has been said, to finish is to add facts, especially in the foreground, where the eye looks for them. Oils and water-colour are much the same as to the pigments used; and correct drawing is the same thing in one vehicle as in the other. The difference is in the use of opaque lights in oil, and the modelling processes which they require. But any one who has learnt enough of gradation, form, and surface, in water-colour, will find himself blending and modelling with some spirit, by the time he has got through the first painting of his first canvas. He has the facts, and can make his picture state them for him, from horizon to foreground. 'The distance and the middle-distance had this general effect, and so much detail was visible in them, in the confusion of space and aërial perspective—look in my lights and you will see. The foreground had such and such stones lying about it, granite or slate or gneiss, broken here and lichened there, lying points up, wedged in old moraine, or like smooth stones of

ancient rivers before the day of man—look and see. And there were ferns in the shaded places, with curling buds and hairy stalks, and heather in clusters of purple spikes, all with strange subtle curves of their own, all in fine intricate detail beyond what I can shew: but in a plain way I shew all I can—look and see.’

It has seemed on the whole better to put this short sketch of oil-colour processes before our chapters on Composition and Sketching from Nature. No more is attempted than to set the student to work on a coherent system, and with a few colours. As he advances in power, he is sure to vary his methods.

Texture may be secured by scraping the *dry* surface of your work with an old razor; or by dabbing it over lightly while wet, as in grounding the canvas at first.

#### MIXED TINTS IN MIDDLE DISTANCE AND FOREGROUND.

##### *Greys.*

Storm grey—Light red and cobalt, deepened with black.	} Mix with white.
Calm grey (faint)—Brown madder and cobalt.	

#### TOWARDS FOREGROUND.

##### *Greens.*

*Spring and early Summer* :—Burnt sienna, Prussian blue, with strontian yellow, raw sienna, or ‘aureolin.’

Heighten lights with emerald green and chromes.

Deepen with Prussian-blue, Indian red, and gamboge.

*Autumnal Shades* :—Raw sienna, light red, brown madder, and cobalt ; Prussian-blue, Indian red, gamboge.

Heighten with cadmium, chromes, and vermilion *ad libitum*.

#### FOREGROUND.

Vandyke brown under. Paint over in sharp form with solid local colours.

But it will probably be best, as you gain decision and power, to paint your foregrounds on the water-colour principle: laying down the richest and brightest hues first all over, and cutting forms out of them with the shade.

## PORTRAIT IN OIL AND WATER-COLOUR.

This part of our book seems hardly complete without a few hints on study and practice for portrait-painting. All good workmen will know how difficult it is to do more than set the student to work: but, as has been so often repeated, this manual professes only to give him principles and rules by which he may learn to teach himself. Before he attempts anything from a living model we will suppose that he has painted a certain number of casts in monochrome, carefully studying the faces, and that he has gained accuracy enough to be able to command that considerable power of likeness which must result from good drawing. He has only to take a canvas or mill-board, draw his cast right on it in charcoal, and secure the outline with chalk. Then let him scumble a tint of raw umber and cobalt, with a little white mixed with medium, thinly over the whole surface, and paint the light side, and all the lights solidly into that in correct form; blending the tint and modelling the surface with the other brush, used for the scumble. When the canvas is covered, it may be well, before drying, to dab the flesh-surface over with a cloth, as directed at p. 339. This secures texture: and the surface may also be scraped when dry. A second and third painting may follow—scumbling the transparent shade over the dry surface, then painting the lights into it in white. We suppose this to have been gone through, and that our student is face to



face with his sitter; and a few hints on dealing with one of those generally unintelligent and intractable beings may, perhaps, be of use.

Consider first if your sitter can be induced to sit still, and keep his features still, or let himself alone, and give you a quiet view of his natural features, without simpering, or making eyes, or looking vigorous and truculent, or assuming the supposed expression of any favourite hero. The great thing of course is to be able to interest him in some subject of conversation while your work proceeds. Nothing makes men more awkwardly self-conscious than sitting for a portrait: and the great thing is to get rid of self-consciousness from the face or expression just when you are actually drawing it. Find, if you can, a point for your sitter to look at which will bring his face to the right direction, and let it be understood between you, that when you look at him, he is to look at that point. Of course all matters relating to position must depend very much upon circumstances, such as the aspect of rooms, height of windows, peculiarities of face, and even the habits of the sitter. This arranged, if you can keep him interested in conversation or otherwise, and get him to look at his point unconsciously, so much the better: if not, he had better be allowed a book on a table-easel, or something which will enable him to read without dropping his eyes too much. Do not let him stiffen his neck, or throw his head too far back: treat him, as Isaac Walton says of his frog, as though you loved him, and settle him into some favourite and comfortable position. There is much expression

of character in the carriage of a head, and its poise on the spine.

As to the light, it will perhaps be best to hide all windows except one behind you, and facing the sitter, and to cover the lower part of that. You will place him, let us say, with his face three-quarters turned to the light—and consequently you will have about half one side of his face visible in shade. When he is once properly seated, the fixed point to look at will enable him always to keep the right position to an inch: and the light, falling obliquely on or about his forehead, will throw good marked shadows on his face. Former practice with casts should help you much in arranging this.

Then treat him first in monochrome, exactly like a cast. In doing so, you will find the same difficulty in portrait-painting as in trying to catch and record any important natural subject; you will meet the great difficulty of representing change or subtle continued motion. Eyes will not be still; and the more animated and vivid the face before you, the more fresh and unaffected its expression, so much the more subtle change and play you will observe in it. However, a sitter will at all events try to help you, which a cloud or a waterfall will not; also, as in landscape, the more subtly you observe, the more you have to record after all, and the higher are the qualities of your work. This first painting in monochrome is certainly the best method for beginners, and perhaps for all except experienced masters. It secures likeness and a scale of light and shade; and by it you partly determine the key of colour in which you mean to paint: the clearer

and brighter hues you mean to put on, the lighter and sharper should be the handling of your flesh-shadows: in fact, the higher key requires higher skill. When your monochrome portrait is thoroughly modelled and dry, scumble again with a green grey<sup>1</sup>, in order to break the flesh-colour which is coming and secure the proper admixture of grey with the warmer hues. Then, if you are using a high bright scale of colour, in painting cherry cheeks and that kind of thing, mix rose madder, raw sienna, and white, with a little megilp, and paint on a half-tint of light; using vermilion afterwards for lips and blushes. If you have a sunburnt man's face to deal with, more raw sienna and a little light red may be added; and so you can go on through all bright yellow or copper-coloured complexions, down to using umber for any coloured gentleman or lady you may wish to immortalize. If, however, you are painting a swarthy face in a dark picture, and low key of colour, light red will be bright enough to be mixed with the white and sienna for your first flesh-tint. Most men's faces are, or ought to be, sunburnt, and you will soon observe the differences of bilious and sanguine temperament, and the necessary colouring. In other words, some men burn black and others brown-red. The best representation of these two types of Englishmen which I know of is that of the Barons in Mr. Watts' great fresco in Lincoln's Inn Hall. The dark face is of the Cromwell type, and is, I believe, a portrait of Sir John Lawrence. The other with the beard and general resemblance to Thor, bears some likeness to the Earl

<sup>1</sup> Say of ivory black, emerald green, white, and a little Prussian blue.

of Leicester. Both faces, at all events, announce themselves as portraits none the less genuine for being more or less idealized. For to *idealize* a face means really, to dwell on and add force and charm to its most suggestive features; to make the spectator see in your picture the ideas and judgments about the sitter which are borne in upon you as you paint him. The difference between the red and black Highlander is still better known than the one we have mentioned: and the same types are to be seen in the Semitic races. Hebrew hair is red enough sometimes, and I have seen it of the finest auburn shades in Jerusalem. I remember also that my guide to the Dead Sea, a Bedouin called Sheykh Salâm ibn Seir, combined the true eagle features of Nineveh, wasted and exaggerated by heat, age, and hunger, with fine yellow-brown hair and beard.

Having finished your first and second painting, the features should be modelled and formed by hatchings with brown or pink in their proper directions, as with an engraver's lines. These will be the same in oil as in water-colour; and in the latter may be followed up by fine stippling. The great success in this is to be able to blend the pure pink and pure yellow-brown, as also the grey shade, delicately together without mixing the colours: this will produce real richness of hue. The effect will be one of true glow and force: and though the resulting colour will be neither crude nor staring, it will hold its own, even though it be hung in an exhibition next to a Master of Fox Hounds or a Lord Mayor.

This system of covering the canvas with scumbled



shade first and painting on the lights seems the best for a beginner. Yet the converse one, of painting on the lights and shades of a face thickly and at first, is recommended by many and good workmen, and may be, for ought we know, the best. Perhaps a student skilled in water-colour may succeed best in oil this way: securing his light and colour first, then glazing and scumbling it over till all falls together into proper tone, or harmonious relation of light and shade. But greater experience seems necessary if one is to work thus. It is generally asserted that the Venetian masters used this method habitually: and of course when our pupil can draw and colour like a Venetian, he will be in a position to do what he likes; and what he does will make him our instructor and not our pupil. The real truth of the matter seems to be<sup>1</sup> that the Venetians used tempera first, painting on canvases prepared with a gesso or plaster ground, and finished up with oil-colour.

The eyes of a portrait are of course the most difficult thing in it, and must be kept to the last. While painting a face, one is sure to gain familiarity with its eyes in successive sittings; and, moreover, it is best to keep them in reserve, as it were, and gain the greatest possible likeness without them. When that is attained, the eyes will give life and power to the whole painting, and raise its value incalculably.

There is one sort of portrait which we advise our pupils to avoid attempting; partly, no doubt, from considerations of their own interest, and their friends'

<sup>1</sup> See chapter on Fresco, Tempera, &c., with letter by Mr. Spencer Stanhope.

personal comfort; but also for strictly artistic reasons. It is that of Caricature. Low caricature of exaggeration like Rowlandson or Gilray is out of date, we are thankful to say: nor is anybody likely to take up inferior caricature, unless it be either from motives of the purest ill-nature and dullest malice. But the work of Doyle<sup>1</sup> and Leech has such evident and obvious merits, and is so easy to understand, that people are apt to think it equally easy to produce: and there can be no greater mistake. The rapid work of these two artists depends on quite special qualities of their own minds, and also on severe study and practice in drawing. To draw in their style means to draw with their power; and their power was gained, like that of all other powerful men, by hard labour. We have recommended tracing Leech's landscape, and repeating it in pen and ink; but his faces are as inimitable as Turner's rapid landscape sketches. High caricature is rather vulgarized at present by the system of copying photographs, which, in as far as they contain exaggerations of the shades, partake in the nature of caricatures; whether that word in its origin be connected with character, or derived, as we have heard, from the Italian 'caricare,' to pile up, exaggerate, overload. Whatever be the first meaning of the word, the *thing* is work for perfectly formed draughtsmen, and quite unfit for students.

There may be an innate power of seeing and seizing likeness of features, as there is a natural instinct for beauty in landscape. But neither can be improved

<sup>1</sup> Tenniel's drawing is more laboured and complete; as is M. Du Maurier's. Either may be copied with advantage by any one who will work closely enough, and line for line.

without exertion, or perfected without continued discipline—and *neither portrait nor landscape can be begun at the wrong end.*

Those who have learnt hatching and stippling in water-colour by practice with grapes or other fruit will soon find they can apply their knowledge to finishing portraits in the same vehicle. The colours we named for oils will do to begin with, and the processes have in fact already been given, except that shade is laid on with one brush and softened with the other, instead of light: and that when all is done with washes, hatched lines and stippling may follow.

## CHAPTER VI.

## COMPOSITION.

AS this is a practical treatise addressed to Art students of various descriptions, who have not much time, as a rule, for metaphysical discussion, I do not feel inclined to define Composition, Invention, Imagination, or like words, which may nevertheless have to be used, as sparingly as possible<sup>1</sup>, in this chapter. The object and purpose of Composition is what we are mainly concerned with; or rather the object and purpose of the composer, what he means to do and may hope to do by real attention to the subject.

Now the object of what we call Composition here is to affect the mind of the person who looks at

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ruskin's account of Composition is quite sufficient for our purpose :—

‘Composition means, literally and simply, putting several things together so as to make *one* thing out of them; the nature and goodness of which they all have a share in producing. Thus, a musician composes an air by putting notes together in certain relations; a poet composes a poem, by putting thoughts and words in pleasant order; and a painter a picture, by putting thoughts, forms, and colours in pleasant order. In all these cases, observe, an *intended unity* must be the result of composition. . . . Everything should be in a determined place, perform an intended part, and act, in that part, advantageously for everything that is connected with it.’ (Elements of Drawing, p. 244.)



your picture (supposing him to be a tolerably sensitive and intelligent person), by the matter of the work and the way it is arranged, or composed, in order to be presented to him. By the matter of a drawing or picture is meant, of course, all the ideas which it is intended to convey: and on their arrangement or composition, or setting together, depends in great measure the effect of the whole thing—not only the immediate appearance of the picture to the eye, but its moral and intellectual effect on the spectator, the amount of true ideas and genuine feeling which he will derive from it. And your object must be, first, to have things or thoughts in your picture which are worth representing; and secondly, to produce them in it in such order and relation as shall make the eye of the spectator take them the way you wish, that is to say, in the order and relation in which you have taken them. The leading idea should come first, so that even an uninformed person who does not know the ‘motive’ or leading purport of the picture, may be able to catch it with some ease; that is to say, the leading idea should be represented by something in the picture which must be the most striking or immediately attractive object in it; or else it must be pointed to, as it were, by some specially conspicuous object. The collection of Rembrandts in the Pinacothek at Munich shews his general use of a principal light in the centre of his picture; or of a burst of light wherever he means the eye to go: and perhaps the easiest and simplest types of this principle of composition are the various Nativities, where the light issues from the Holy

Child, and where the first thing seen in the picture is necessarily the most important thing. This may be said to be the real underlying principle of composition, that the leading idea shall take the lead. It is the same in pure landscape as in historical fresco; the painter will always lead the eye, if he can, to his favourite passage: if he enjoys his distance most, the foreground will not have marked figures in it, or they will be moving on towards it in perspective; if he delights in his foreground and figures, he will make his distance into their background. For, be it observed, where the picture is not like a history, and involves no action of figures, the leading idea is its chief beauty: and the most successful composition is that which surrounds a beautiful idea or object with others in positions subordinate to it, which assist it by harmony or contrast, like the setting of a large fine stone. The subordination of the others to a leading idea secures what is called Unity; that is, it shews at once what the picture is about. In our frontispiece, the leading interest gathers round the big stone rather on the left. He is the principal object; attention is called to him by means of delicate contrast: he is pale, cubical, and solid on his light side: his shadowed side is dark and opaque: before that side is the stream, which is rich, dark, and transparent, contrasting with both the light and dark side of the stone; and also giving a sense of hidden soft-gliding delicacy which contrasts with one's feeling about him. He is the chief character in the sketch, because in the old times he must have come violently

into the land he occupies in a raid, like a Northern invader or mountaineer; and the question arises, whether he came down with the stream he now lives by, when it was stronger; or if he rolled down the hill side *suo Marte*; or if he is a trace of the ancient incursion of some great glacier. Many a day he has been quiet, however, and been a settled and not a rolling stone. So he has gathered moss; and the heather and briars and young ash saplings have grown round him, though the sheep have nibbled them rather; and we suppose a small trout lives under him in the shadow, and that the ouzels come down and dip about him after caddis worms. He is a piece of the far hills, but they do not miss him; like the Skyeman Mac Rimmon, 'he returns no more—no more—no more.'

This may be considered rather sentimental and perhaps silly. But this book is written in a greater degree for those who have some feeling of their own about landscape than for those who have not; and one may say that if Sentiment or Feeling will not make a painter, dulness will not do it either. And the fact is, that in all painting, and all the inventive or creative pursuits, the habits or faculty of observation and rapid association and connexion of ideas make the artist: and these are capable of cultivation. We do not deny that there is some risk of over-cultivating them; and no habit of mind can be worse than that of trying to be desperately imaginative about everything. And this is one reason why a painter should not avoid society, if he can help it; that it is good for him to learn to follow a

train of reverie when it comes to him; and learn all the time to be prosaic with quiet people, and not expect everybody to understand him. However this may be, it is certain that true feeling gains power by quiet and unaffected cultivation: and there is no doubt that minuteness of sight, as well as correctness, is a matter of study and acquirement; so it is also with habits of attention and observation. And in all education we think that very often sufficient allowance is not made for reverie, and that scarcely enough time for easy reception of natural ideas and half-unconscious pondering over them is allowed boys and girls. People always want to see the former, at all events, either steadily at work or noisily at play: England expects either so much Latin or so much cricket of all her smaller children; and everybody is impatient at seeing them 'moon about and do nothing.' While they really do nothing it is all well with them—their not getting into mischief is something. If they are capable of connected thought or fancy, whether it be about fairies or ponies or lessons, let them go on with it: they are taking their time and dreaming out their little dream,—and had better be left to it. Real idleness soon betrays itself, by ill-temper, listlessness, or mischief.

This has little to do, however, with our remarks on composition, since, as was observed at first, we can do no more than offer some remarks on it. It is doing a good work for any person to induce him to look at Turner's '*Liber Studiorum*:' and as the plates have been photographed (though most unfortunately) and are themselves more accessible than



they were, it will be well to refer to the book for one or two instances of powerful arrangement, by which the desired thoughts are conveyed to the spectator's mind in the easiest and most decisive way: we shall choose the easiest and most obvious, with subjects of slighter or deeper interest. The sea-piece called 'A Brisk Gale' is a noble study of sea and cloud and shipping: the first object in it which catches the eye is the sail of a fishing-boat, which is the brightest object in a long line of illuminated sea. That line of light makes one look at the clouds which have broken to let it through; and the faint streaks of slanting rain instantly make one see how the wind blows from the left of the picture. The eye runs along the horizontal illuminated line, and is led off at an angle, up the wild edges of heaped storm-clouds, the lateral burst of light shewing them with all their forms. That is the way out of the picture. Another glance at the white sail and the attention is caught by the black sail of a cutter in the full darkness and strength of the gale, running out to the line-of-battle ship at anchor in the line of light—the principal minor incident in the picture. From the wake of the cutter the eye is led out of the picture, or rather round it, to the large ship and line of light again, by marvellously drawn waves foaming and brightly illuminated at top, all lashed over to the right by the wind. It is also guided by a white sea-gull and the large ensign on board the liner, which last also give vast depth to the stormy horizon behind them. Or notice in Calais harbour how every line points

to the old spire; or in Ramsgate how the central mass of light shews the way into the harbour, which the nearest vessel will just fetch on her present tack: or, again, in the *S. Gothard* how the first slow mule coming out of the long gallery carries the eye to another at the further end; how the line of the wonderful road which claimed Turner's chief admiration is marked far below in the more open valley.

In the plates, where the interest is great and depends on important figures, the principle of composition is perhaps easier to understand, because the leading fact in the picture is seen at once in its proper position. The figures in *Cephalus* and *Procris* challenge attention at once. But the plate of *Rizpah* and her dead sons is certainly one of the greatest examples which exist of powerful composition, and of the command which it asserts over the eye of any ordinarily careful spectator. The chief light in the picture is the weary mother's torch, which at once catches the eye and directs attention to its various reflections—on the sackcloth spread on the rock; on the languid, exhausted, living figure of the watcher; on the fleshless ribs and upturned skeleton feet of the dead sons of *Saul*; and lastly, on the points of a small crown, such as *Saul's* concubine once wore. Then the powerful contrast between the near-looking brightness of the rising moon and the massive shade of the oaks of the middle-distance claims notice, and the eye falls unavoidably on a small object sticking up in the nearer middle-distance. It points out another watcher; it is the

impatient tail of a leopard, waving in hungry irresolution: and a large bird is hovering above him, dark against the light, while another is wheeling about nearer, reflecting the light and sharply relieved against the foreground darks. Just between the two birds are slightly drawn the sheaves of barley harvest. The mind is led through every thought which the text of Scripture gives, as minutely as by written narrative, and with impressiveness and reality beyond all words.

Works of transcendent imagination and power are beyond rules of composition, it is true; but then they generally conform to rules, because rules are made out of them: at all events it is possible to get good ideas about rules and principles from them. Rules of composition are very commonly, and quite rightly, generalizations from the works of great painters. These men command the eye and the mind they scarcely know how; and without fixed and completed method. But some of the means they use can be described and imitated. And imitating a good painter's manner and method will be of the greatest use to the student, if he will do it strictly by way of exercise, and remember that the method is only a small part of the power of the master, the ideas conveyed by his work being the great thing.

Enough has been said of Contrast, which involves excitement; and is naturally used in subjects where strong feelings are engaged, or violent action is represented. Storm and mountain scenery in landscape involve all the sense of passion and vehement action, to the painter or any tolerably sensitive spectator, as

much as tragic scenes or battle-pieces, with this great advantage, that their expression of it can never be ignoble. Of course it is found that the use of contrast in a picture tends to excitement, and that of likeness to repose: though harmony involves much delicate contrast, and is best produced by the suggestion of contrast overcome. Cuypp's pictures of dreamy afternoon repose derive their thoroughly soothing and sleepy effect from the spectator's feeling, or unconscious thought, of how the different colours of the objects in the picture are merged in light, and all the greys and greens and browns are embraced and lapped in gold. Contrast is there, you know, and you are pleased that it is there and that you do not see it, but are overcome with the animal feeling of soft brightness and ease and absence of interest, and deafness to the call of time. The fact is, that contrast and harmony are things dependent on each other; and they vary mutually like light and darkness. A still summer-day effect in a picture of Glencoe or the Valley of Zermatt would involve a feeling of calm; and all its parts would have to be somehow pervaded with peace—the softer lines dwelt on, the brightest tints used, little circumstances of rest put in, and so on. That, well done, would be a great Harmony of Quiet. But the whole quiet effect of such a picture would depend first on the implied contrast of Glencoe or Zermatt in calm, with Glencoe or Zermatt in storm; and its repose would be felt as repose after toil. Secondly, mountain scenery always suggests the action of immeasurably great forces which have now in great part ceased to act; and the stillness of a mountain valley carries with it an undefined suggestion of



the inconceivable power of volcanic or watery action by which the valley was formed.

The object of composition in pictures is perfectly well stated in Horace's remark as to poetry :—

‘Non satis est pulchra esse poemata; dulcia sunt  
Et quocunque volunt, animum auditoris agunt.’

The power over the ‘*animum auditoris*,’ or ‘*spectatoris*,’ is the thing: and there are various technical means of gaining it by paying little attentions to the eye and delicately flattering the intellect. Technical rules of composition ought not to be undervalued or neglected; they are not all, they are not much; but ignorance of them, or idle contradiction or neglect, will do great harm to any picture. Almost every eye likes to follow a good curve; every trained eye will, as a matter of course. Consequently, when the salient objects of a picture are arranged so as to follow each other in a good curve, that is a great point gained in its composition: every competent and careful person who looks at it will experience pleasure, consciously or unconsciously, from following with his eye the harmonious line of leading points: and that pleasure will lead him about your picture where you please. We may call our third law of composition that of Arrangement in curves, or Unity and Harmony (by contrast or similarity).

We have no room to quote so long a passage as the dissertation on lines of curvature in vol. iv. of ‘*Modern Painters*,’ and must refer the student to it in hope that it will receive from him all the attention it deserves. The laws of beauty in abstract line there laid down are

at least sufficient for the purposes of the artist, and probably would go far towards satisfying a scientific analyst. For our purpose, wishing rather to tell the student of certain classes of beautiful curves, rather than to attempt to lay down rules for what curves he is to consider beautiful, we can only give a few extracts from the valuable dissertation we have mentioned.

It would probably be said, in ordinary painters' or sketchers' language, that the beauty of a curve consists in its 'springing' or sweeping character. The one word 'springing' conveys an idea of vigorous effort in its origin; the other, 'sweeping,' that of severity of curvature, approaching to a right line. Such curves as those of a distant shore may be called sweeping curves, because being nearly right lines they convey the idea of getting over ground as fast as possible, and also because they suggest natural forms mostly observed in distance or at a distance, such as the lines of extensive plains or of tolerably calm sea. And their impressiveness results from the feeling which is in them of space, in fact of infinity. Curves which radiate from a centre, like those of leaves and all vegetation, are felt to be springing curves: they are understood to start from their origin and go forth towards infinity as far as they can: and they suggest vital force and vigour. It is not necessary to distinguish these curves from each other, because almost all good lines spring vividly from their origin and sweep off into severity of curve afterwards. But all such lines at once separate themselves from the regular or monotonous curves, such as may be drawn with compasses; or are generated in any invariable mathematical way,

as the sections of a cone, and the cycloid. The parabola and hyperbola may be excepted, as each of them consists of a *pair* of very beautiful curves. But all the beautiful natural curves are irregular: the outer edge of a wing of any bird of powerful flight, as of the hawk or gull among the long-winged birds, or the grouse, and teal or other ducks, among the short-winged, is an excellent example of simple beauty of springing line. The expression of life and vital strength in the latter example depends of course on the way in which the feathers radiate from the bone or centre of motion: the sense of power in the long wing is conveyed by the severe line of the shoulder and greater quills<sup>1</sup>.

It should be remembered that the principles and rules which we are giving are rules of composition only, that is to say, that they suggest order and arrangement for ideas which you already possess, and that the value of an original work depends on

<sup>1</sup> The vigour of the short wing suggests what we call springing curves: the graceful outline of the long wing illustrates the long or sweeping curves. This is beautifully shewn in a plate of vol. iv. of 'Modern Painters,' where the wing-forms are shewn exactly to resemble those of the lower slopes of a mountain.

It is impossible for us to take up the subject of abstract lines here, or to make any real enquiry into the causes of their greater or less beauty. The twentieth chapter of 'The Stones of Venice' should be carefully studied, especially in all that relates to plate vii. It is very possible that the student may not at present see that one line is more beautiful than another. But we think as he gains knowledge, and practises drawing, he will find at all events that he prefers pictures which are based on fine natural lines. And the chapter of 'The Stones of Venice' which we have referred to, will give him some examples of the most beautiful contours of objects, great and small, and with valuable analyses and classifications.

matter rather than arrangement. They cannot supply the thoughts or facts you wish to paint; and, as has been hinted, powerful thoughts and strong impressions from Nature generally arrange themselves in the mind and on the canvas in pretty intelligible order; so that he who possesses them will comply more or less unconsciously with most of the principles here given. We have placed opposite chapter i. a rude sketch of some of the main lines of Turner's *Mer de Glace* in the '*Liber Studiorum*:' a work which for power of expressive line seems to us quite unsurpassed in Art. It is strictly a composition, as there is no spot on the *Chapeau* side of the *Mer de Glace* which commands the particular outline given. Mr. Ruskin's partial analysis of the plate is directed to prove how thoroughly the character and structure of the *aiguilles* or sharply pointed mountains of the valley of *Chamonix* are felt in and (perhaps unconsciously) expressed by Turner's work. It is not in his way to point out in that part of his work the wonderful power of Turner's glacier-drawing, which he refers to elsewhere in speaking of the print of the *Glacier des Bossons*. Our rough line sketch with the few dotted curves will enable the pupil to trace what may be called springing curves all over the picture. If he will refer to the plate, or the photograph published by Mr. Hogarth, he will observe the way in which the central light of the ice is repeated by that of the sky and upper snow: how the eye cannot help going first to the central light, and is then caught by the leaping lines of ice-fracture. He will



see in our woodcut how they point up to the wild aiguilles, which in their turn draw back from and suggest the distance and grandeur of the faintly-seen snow-peak far away. Next, his attention is handed on from one jagged edge to another along the high ridge to the right, finding no rest until it slides down the dark pine-edged cliff over the Montanvert to the glacier again; where it is at once seized on by the great descending curve of the ice from the left, carried across nearly out of the picture, and brought round again to below the principal light on the sharpest ice-peaks. Then the spectator begins to see that the lines are lines of furious motion, and that the peaks break back like sea-waves when wind is against tide, or those of a torrent when it first meets a great submerged rock. In short, it is evident that Turner understood the flow and progress of the glacier, was deeply impressed by it, and determined that other people should feel it. Then at last, in the left-hand corner, are the ugly wrecks and crumbling ruin of the dismal moraine: it is all foul with its own work of destruction. Great rocks are there half ground to powder, and dusty meal of granite as fine as flour; various jagged edges of what once was pure snow: the desperate grind of the massive ploughshare in its unyielding furrow, where clear ice bites on the clean rock—all is there. All this was given on paper in form and colour long before any written words in the English language had told men anything about it; when De Saussure was sole authority, and when the old guides might still have remembered how he ascended Mont

Blanc<sup>1</sup> in a long scarlet coat and cocked hat with gold cockade, &c., and his son in lemon-colour and top-boots.

There are other rules or practical objects to aim at in what is called composition, which will be found to be really involved in the principles we have given. They are to be mentioned as means of expressing and securing the feeling of harmony; either by contrast, or by similarity, or by arrangement in beautiful curves. We presume that unity expresses the proper pre-eminence of a leading idea, and that harmony expresses the means by which that leading idea is kept in its place of command. It is best also to give some of the terms used in teaching composition, and to suggest how they may all be classified under our principle, that a composition is several ideas made into one new one, with skilful use either of contrast, which produces excitement, or of harmony, which produces repose, or of both together,—which produces reflective repose. These terms are especially frequent in lectures or treatises on decorative or highly conventional composition, such as patterns for ornamental manufacture: and we think their origin is the same.

{ Repetition, i. e. of the same idea in varied forms—  
 { Symmetry, or consistency of idea and similarity of  
 { form, with evident novelty of both; or at least  
 { with difference of relation—  
 { Balance, or symmetry of masses  
 —are three different ways of expressing harmony of

<sup>1</sup> See old prints and illustrations. We believe, by the way, that young M. de Saussure did not ascend Mont Blanc; but he often accompanied his father: and we well remember this picture.

contrast or harmony of likeness. Repetition gives harmony of likeness; the spectator finds unity of meaning in any number of varied forms. Look, for example, at the leaping lines all over the *Mer de Glace* etching, and the *aiguille-points*: all 'alike, with a difference.' Symmetry expresses that which makes repetition so agreeable, the mingled resemblance and variety of forms; like the recurrence of a theme in a musical composition, where the notes are always changing. It is based on the principle of unity by similarity. Observe in the example how all the peaks resemble one another without repeating each other in any case. If you think they are exactly like each other, take a piece of tracing-paper and a fine pencil, and draw a few of them. This should be done in any case, and very carefully: and the tracing should further be completed, in pen and ink, over the pencil lines; yet they should not be followed exactly, but used as guides for firm pen-drawing with the original copy before you.

Balance of masses is well illustrated in the plate of the *Mer de Glace*; where the two lower corners of the picture balance each other as masses of darkness, and also repeat the two dark sides of the picture, which balance each other also to right and left, while the pale sky with its snow-peak, and the white glacier-ice, do the same above and below. It will be seen at once that balance of parts, where there is a leading idea to fuse them into a whole, only conduces to the full expression of such motive or leading idea. It is impossible to give any marked rule on the matter except the old one, 'Know what you mean

to do, and do it.' While the parts of a picture are felt to be parts, they may be elaborated to any extent; but they should balance each other as parts of a whole, not contend with each other on unconnected interests.

Breadth and unity are destroyed when there are many objects of equal interest about a picture. The criticism in the preface to 'Modern Painters' on Claude's landscape called *Il Mulino*, or on the Wouvermans landscape in vol. v., are admirably detailed accounts of this. There should be some ruling motive in a work, which should have evidently a claim on the spectator's attention; instead of a number of groups scrambling for it, like a set of importunate beggars. Giotto's groups balance each other exactly, but they are all united in the purpose of his picture.

Breadth seems to be a part or means of unity, by proper subjection of the whole picture to its leading idea. We have said a good deal of this in the first part of this chapter; but we cannot give any rules or receipts for having leading or other ideas, except the general moral precepts of doing one's best, and being faithful to one's gifts, especially the chief gift of *Admiration*; or delight in beauty as God's work for man. Those who will look for beauty and store it in their memory, will not want ideas by the time they know how to draw; and will be able to take them in proper order, and one at a time. In our example in lines, the leading idea is pointed to by the flow of the glacier, and the sharpness of the peaks. The motion is given mainly by the sweeping lines of the ice which swing the



eye across and across, as the weight of a torrent rounding a corner sets over, first on one side, then on the other; the sharpness of form is variously repeated by the rocky pinnacles. Both result in such feeling of force and desolation as completes the impressiveness of the picture. All its ideas converge in that of Death and its power.

What is called the principle of Interpenetration is of great technical value in composition, whether pictorial or decorative. It consists in carrying portions of light into the principal masses of shade, and placing small spaces of dark upon light, with proper balance and relation to each other. It is a principle strongly insisted on in Mr. Prout's works on light and shade, and of course depends on that of contrast. It is, in fact, contrast artfully contrived; and its success depends on proportion and balance; and in higher Art, on the skill with which the artifice is concealed—as in the white tongue of ice-forms, on the right of the Mer de Glace plate, which runs into the deep shade. The quarterings of a shield are a simple instance; and the sea-mews and illuminated wave-tops in the one or two Turner sea-pieces we have mentioned are repeated by most marine painters. The use of the torch, bat, sackcloth, and trees in Rizpah is very noticeable.

An artifice frequently used whenever there is opportunity for it is the suggestion of distance and perspective by interlacing lines such as tree-trunks crossing each other in a forest picture (see *Cephalus* and *Procris*, *Blair Athol*, *Æsacus* and *Hesperie*, with others in the '*Liber Studiorum*'). Incident of this

kind should be very carefully studied, as it often gives opportunity for expressing space just when it is most wanted. The pleasure which interlacing lines give the mind, seems to be derived from their radiation, and from the sense of variety in unity, of organic form, and modulated change, which they always convey. The radiation of the lines in the Mer de Glace from the centre of the glacier is visible at a glance, and we have already spoken of the way in which they guide the eye and call attention to the principal points which the artist meant to enforce.

Mr. Prout's writings on Composition have considerable value, and the subject is exhausted in Mr. Ruskin's various works. Taking the word as expressive of the best arrangement of the greatest ideas, into an Unity or great new Idea, it is quite clear that it is almost synonymous with artistic power, as we have already said: and we repeat that we can give no rules for acquiring such power, but can only suggest means whereby the reader may develop all powers of the kind, which are in him, to the fullest extent. Also we fully believe that all men possess some such powers; that sensitive apprehension of not possessing them is one favourable sign of their existence; and that when the gift of admiration and keen pursuit of beauty are combined with power of arrangement, the artistic temper seems to be almost complete, and to want only the propelling and sustaining qualities of will, perseverance, or necessity.

## CHAPTER VII.

## ON LANDSCAPE SKETCHING.

WE suppose that sketchers multiply as Art grows popular; and, indeed, amateur pursuit of Art generally begins with what is called 'a taste for sketching.' Most people understand by the word the act of drawing rapidly from Nature, or making memoranda from observed objects, without any intention of carrying them out with perfect finish. All drawings for parts of a picture, or expressions of its first idea in a hasty way, from necessary eagerness to seize the flying thought, are also called sketches, as distinguished from studies, or more laboured work of an incomplete kind. These latter are highly finished copies of part of a work; the former may contain all the scheme of the whole work. We shall take Landscape Sketching from Nature by itself, and must plead for it as a pursuit having real and great value of its own, not only because it is the means of committing people to Art, so to speak, and of leading them from amateur practice into serious work; but because it is indispensable to the true artist; though some of our best men seem to reject the very idea of rapid work altogether.

Of course no man can paint what he has not seen. The question is, How long must he have had it before his eyes, before he is justified in trying to record it?

Beauty may sometimes be seen and studied; it will more often be seen at a glance, without time for study. There is no time to study waves and clouds, or their effects—they *must* be painted from memory. Many painters may consider such things as unfit subjects for their art; but at all events the general verdict, and not merely the popular one, will for ever go against them. And one of the senses of the word ‘sketching’—perhaps its special and peculiar sense—seems to go against it too. That which is seen in a continual state of perceptible change is *seen*, in a different sense of the word from that which remains at rest for long periods of time together, and gives the painter leisure at his work. Seeing change is not the same thing as seeing a thing at rest. You are motionless, so will your picture be when it is done, but it is to represent vivid change and furious motion. The fact is obvious, that the multitudinous changes of air and water in motion may be sketched, but cannot be studied, in the same sense in which a man may sit down and make a study of the Torso. The sketcher may have to record the effect of an instant of consciousness, and use all his skill and a great deal of his time in recording the impressions of a moment. ‘Paint your impressions,’ said Turner. When he was induced to make an observation on Art, we believe it was generally found to be an important one: and this example is strongly in favour of our view, and goes far to establish it. But not every impression can be painted; and our great difficulty is often that of choice, self-restraint, and avoidance of things beyond us. The artist will have knowingly and willingly to



let many lovely scenes and effects go by, and trust to memory to save him a few features of them. It is not only because he cannot do them justice—nobody can—it is because he would be only distracting himself and wasting time in attempts which would not advance him in his knowledge of his trade. For up to a certain point every successive picture ought to carry the artist forward. Each picture should be to him the record of his having learnt either some new tint, or some new process, or learnt to put down some natural fact new to him in a language understood of the people.

The regular landscape amateur, we suppose, intends principally to assist his own memory of Nature by such records as he can learn to make. This is the humblest form of artistic purpose which entitles him to our notice or advice at all in a serious way. His object is to create himself a symbol of some observed beauty or wonder of Nature, which shall record it always for himself. The question then occurs, How far shall he try to record it for others? In shewing it to those who have seen and noticed it, he converses with his peers, and compares notes: in shewing the sketch to those who have not seen the thing, he so far tries to instruct. But the amateur, *qua* amateur, studies and sketches for himself. The artist sketches with a view to composing a picture, which is virtually the public's; in the high view he wants to teach by it; in the low view he wants to sell it: he is, therefore, bound not only to write its facts down in form and colour for himself, but to write them down for the public in such a way that they may enjoy as well as understand them. And his doing this effectively

ought to depend on a mass of former knowledge, natural or technical. It is the possession of all this prior knowledge which really distinguishes artist and amateur. Publicity is an accident of the artist, as logicians say,—knowledge of his work is his essence. A room full of water-colour drawings by the working classes is no doubt worth a visit, and is generally well visited; so would be one which contained work done by the episcopal or judicial bench. But both would most probably display a certain inferiority of technical knowledge, or limited memory of natural facts; and in proportion as they ceased to display these deficiencies, they would cease to be amateur work and become artistic. In other words, supposing a sketch to have been worked out till there are plenty of truths in it—facts well drawn, well coloured, and so composed as to lead the spectator's attention about the picture, and make him see them as the painter intends him to see them—then it is a picture, whoever painted it, and he who did it is artist and author. According to the number of failures in technicalities, he is a good or bad painter. If a man makes sketches and retains his pleasure in them because of the beauty that is past, he will follow that pleasure, in all human probability, and it will lead him on towards serious study of Art with the view of reproducing beauty. He will begin to sketch with a view to making pictures; from a contented amateur he will become a struggling student, and find that he has begun a voyage on the sea which '*sempre si fa maggiore.*' In fact, the making a picture is an act of authorship; it is true there are not many original pictures, but then there are even fewer original books, because forms and

colours are fresher things than pen and ink, and have all sorts of original and noticeable facts of their own. Suppose, by way of analogy, that a young lady writes charming letters, as many girls do, for her friends: she records her life and its doings in pen and ink: it is amateur work, and has a charm of its own—freshness, humour, purity, and perhaps knowledge or keen observation. If she is betrayed into a domestic novel, or a published journal, she sits down to her picture: she begins to compare, to arrange, to idealize;—and assuredly she finds it somewhat difficult to do this well: if she is wise, she sees that her difficulties proceed from want of knowledge of life in general, and is content to wait awhile, and give methodical labour to her production. And, it must be observed, that producing careless or ill-considered work now is a much less excusable matter than it used to be, in landscape or other Art. Thirty years ago it was a matter of difficulty, time, and expense, to get even fairly good instruction in any kind of drawing. In landscape, that is to say, in genuine study from Nature, it was nearly impossible. Painters there were, but very few drawing-masters: and their system of instruction and knowledge of Nature would not be considered endurable in our days. Harding's 'Lessons on Art,' and his various progressive studies of trees and home-scenery, have produced an effect in popularizing a good conventional style of drawing from Nature, which cannot be too well understood. The world has advanced beyond them now, to a great extent: but I cannot help thinking that a strong majority of the landscape sketchers who have

gone through a course of Harding, have found great benefit from him. His rapid lithographs were full of character, and the short written instructions which accompanied them were always to the purpose. In a simple way, which nobody could fail to understand, he called attention to the study of character in landscape; and the study of his educational writings on Art may be said to be a good preparation for reading Mr. Ruskin's books on landscape, just as the study of his pictures will guide attentive eyes to intelligent perusal of Turner's more powerful works. From his power over tree-character, and also from his teaching power in enabling his reader to understand it and begin to observe Nature for himself, we must pronounce Harding first of sketchers in such subject, and also the best early teacher. David Cox's example, great as it is, has probably done serious harm to many imitators who have fallen into the snare of imitating his manner of execution without imitating his manner of study. Had they considered that his powers were really those of about one man in ten thousand, they would not have been guilty of the unconscious vanity of trying to imitate his style. To imitate any man's style is like trying to transplant a tender flower in full blow from his garden into quite different soil in your own. The flowers you will get will never be anything like what it produced before, even if the plant does not wither completely. Supposing a student gifted with one-tenth of that feeling for woodland and lower mountain which made David Cox the boldest and best sketcher in the world: suppose that he studies oak, ash, and thorn, and Welch granite and heather, for many years of life



in the open air, doing little else; supposing that he has a great unconscious gift of composition besides—then he may produce rapid drawings, in time, which shall be at least one-tenth as good as David Cox's. And that is worth doing: for he will to a certainty discover many things for himself, and diverge from copying Cox, as he honourably follows Cox's example, working from Nature as a disciple, and not a plagiarist. But if he only copies drawings, and tries to pick up the sylvan master's manner, he will end as he has begun,—copyist and no painter; plagiarist and no true amateur. Copying the picture is not copying the man. One does that by working as he worked: and Cox copied pictures no more than Turner. And the same remark applies to copying Rafael or Titian, or anybody else. Study the sketches and imperfect works, if you will: see how the master worked technically, where you can see it: study his pictures, and see what motive and purpose he laboured with, and where in Nature his impressions came from. Then you must do as he did, and go and seek for impressions like his from Nature; you must go to the same scenery or to analogous scenery. Titian studied in Cadore; you may go to the Lakes, and verify much of his work there by observing its truth to actual rocks, waters, and vegetation: and having done thus much, you will find yourself adding original discoveries of your own to the verified observations of your master which you have made your own. This is planting your exotic flowers of observed beauty in their own soil, prepared in your own garden: mere copying is only pulling off blossoms; for the most part it is spoiling them at the same time.

This brings us back to Harding as an instructor ; because we have named him as the best of landscape drawing-masters at first. As has been said, there is no doubt that the best drawing-master for real beginners is the well-drilled South Kensington teacher, who will enable you to draw with a free hand and correct eye. He will teach you to draw common things rightly : and things right are always to be studied before things beautiful. But one merit of Harding's works at this day is in their imperfection. Every pupil who is worth anything, that is to say, who has keen perceptions and true feeling, will be able to learn Harding's method ; will face Nature with its assistance ; will find it inadequate, yet helpful ; and will proceed to apply it, and add methods of his own to it. It is, in fact, our best grammar of out-door landscape Art, because it is the best illustrated treatise on the subject, in which the examples are elementary enough. Prout's and Cox's works are excellent for composition, and will do much towards calling out feeling, where that undefinable quality exists. But they do not insist on hand-exercises, like scales on a pianoforte ; and Harding does.

And here we get to what we should have begun with. It is useless to try to draw from Nature, unless you can draw. This may seem obvious, but large numbers of amateurs go directly against it ; and we ourselves, many years ago, began scrawling from Nature from sheer admiration, and made outlines and rough sketches which were full of feeling, but which our friends generally looked at wrong side uppermost. Then we had ' lessons in colour ' from one who deserved a better fate than to minister to our ignorance. Then we began

Harding's trees; then we began to see much more in trees, and all other things, than ever before: and so we were committed to landscape-drawing, probably for life. Travel, and continued attempts from Nature, and study of Mr. Ruskin's works, and copying from Durer and the 'Liber Studiorum,' enabled us to make some progress: but with every step in advance came clearer understanding that we could not draw after all, and that ultimately we should have to learn by beginning at the beginning. This we did at last; but our after feelings have been dashed with a good deal of vexation to think how much time and effort we wasted, for want of an ordinary Art-school course of drawing, free-hand and from the cast. There is no doubt that when grown people (or well-occupied people) are led to wish to be able to express themselves by painting, they are worse than their juniors in their demands for a royal road to success. They want to draw a little, they tell you,—just so as to be able to put down, say a panoramic sketch of the valley of Chamonix, or an impression of a Highland thunderstorm, or some other bagatelle, in two hours' work. What has learning to draw a star-pattern, or to copy a cast of a hand or foot rightly, to do with them? They do not want to take pains over drawing and bisecting straight lines; they want to draw sunsets and torrents without any trouble. They think, in a general way, that they can walk into Messrs. Winsor and Newton's, and purchase a bottle of the hues of earthquake and eclipse, and then be taught in six lessons to paint the eclipse and the earthquake very like. They do not want to draw right—that is for artists; they only want to draw a little.

That is to say, they want to draw a great deal with little trouble: or, in other words, they either think they can learn to produce showy or impressive landscapes with no defined forms in them; or to be shewn some patent way of evading all difficulties, and making something out of nothing. And they will, perhaps, appeal to David Cox, and request to be taught his touch and style: to be taught, in a dozen lessons, the knowledge of Nature and power of expression which took all his powers a lifetime to gain.

Mulready's pithy advice to the student was 'Know what you have to do, and do it.' It sounds like a mere truism, or vague encouragement. But its real meaning is, as we apprehend, that method is everything to the learner, and that aimless effort is nugatory. We must try to give the sketcher some rules for learning to know what to do in the presence of Nature. Let him, in the first place, look for a simple subject. By this we do not mean an unimpressive one, or an every-day one. There are scenes which naturally fall into pictures, and which strike even unpractised eyes with an ordered beauty, intelligible and capable of analysis and expression. Do not, it may be said as a rule, choose any subject unless you can tell yourself or others what is the chief beauty of it. Any subject which has a leading feature is so far simple, that it allows you to give almost all your attention to that feature, and you can so far define to yourself what you have to do: that is to say, you have to represent a leading idea, and had better add no circumstance which does not develop it or throw light on it. Of course accurate



drawing of inferior parts does throw light on the main part, and is by all means to be done to the best of your power. But you had better leave out features which you do not feel to be necessary. What you do put in, you ought to draw as well as you can, and realize as far as you can. So I should say, choose some quiet pool in a mountain river, or reach in a lowland one, where there are steady reflections. Or if it may be, take some small tarn or bay in our own Lake country, in the calm of evening or morning, when there is not more than one rare sigh of wind at a time to confuse the polished surface, in which inverted earth and sky are seen as in a glass, darkly. There is your impression, calm and the feeling of power at rest: what you have to do is to play on that theme; and the mirror of waters is your chief means of expression, it will therefore be the leading feature of your picture. To all those reflections you must attend, and the value of your work will vary as you pay more or less perfect attention to them. There is real reason for choice of such scenes. Their beauty is very great, and unusually capable of analysis, and a very slight amount of dexterity and previous practice in sketching will enable a man to give himself some pleasure in his work. Moreover, he will soon find that he cannot get his water bright, or deep, or still, without getting his reflections nearly right; and that he never can have a chance of doing that, unless he can draw the objects of which they are reflections. The fact is, a sketch of a tarn or bay composes itself, and naturally takes the form

of a picture rather than of a simple study; and also, the student will soon understand that his success in it depends on his making it a careful study, and not thinking of it as a picture. One of the great early difficulties is to remember that in making a sketch on the spot you are taking a lesson from Nature, whereas in painting a picture you are presenting to other people the results of what you have learnt, and your own thoughts about it—trying, in fact, to give a lesson. As a learner you draw what you see, adding as little as possible of your own. As a painter, you may add, and omit, and arrange; at least we never knew anybody who did not do so in some form or degree. And if you can get a good subject with plenty of reflections, and will look well at it and make a real effort to put it down nearly as you see it, it will be a lesson of the greatest value, for it will make you draw your subject twice over, without fatiguing you. Of course it is important to have subjects which will wait for you. And this is one of the many reasons for insisting on the foregrounds of all your drawings. One enjoys the distance, but learns by the nearer objects; nor can any method be progressive without careful study of them. In our view, sketching does not consist in a constant effort to evade accurate drawing, but in accurate drawing rapidly done. Now it is much easier to see what is near than to see what is far off: you may think, when you have run a successful wash of purple over your distant hills, that they look pretty well, and may be let alone: but three or four big stones and some drift-timber

or broad-leaved weeds close to you, will challenge your real attention and powers of drawing. If you can deal with them properly, you will see their immense importance in your work; and the further you carry them, the greater value they will give it. If you cannot please yourself with them as with the rest of your work, at least do your best at them faithfully, or make a separate study of them. Young sketchers always fly at the distance because it is easiest: perhaps they do not even think of the foreground till they are half through their distance.

Now, if it be necessary to know what one is going to do with one's picture, one ought to know what one is going to do with that part of it which every spectator will look at first. That ought not to be left to chance. In every sketch or picture objects bear some relation to each other; and if you are to know what to do, you must determine that relation in your mind and mark and adhere to it in drawing them. You may like delightful old Lucerne as it once was in its quaint beauty and freshness—the city of the old Switzer—obviously built, every house of it, with his own deal and his own limestone; redolent of the rocks of Uri, and the pines of Unterwalden. Or you may like it as it is, all but invisible behind its huge square factories of hotels, and embellished with idle women in crinoline. But if you are to draw it so, you must at all events settle in your mind from the first, where you will put your crinoline and where you will put your hotels: and if you want to represent either you must draw them.

All this presupposes plenty of time: and this re-opens the question of how far it is worth while trying to sketch against time. It is all very well to settle the question by a simple prohibition. But when you have gained power enough, the question will settle itself. You will no longer feel tempted to dash at hopeless scratch-sketches of beautiful scenes as you pass them on steamer or diligence; knowing their greatness and your own helplessness. You will look hard, learn some small thing, and be thankful. Yet you may be right in scoring that small thing down: and men differ very much in their power of doing it. Turner's hastiest sketches, some of those on the Lake of Lucerne, now I believe at South Kensington, cannot have occupied him above ten minutes. There are one or two, I think of the Splügen, which only consist of a few leading lines: the latter are exceptional, being a mere record of the tremendous profile-line of the *Via Mala* precipices. But these are not so much representative sketches, as shorthand notes to assist his memory and invention—a zigzag line stands for pines, and is continued in an unbroken curve to indicate smooth rock. However, as soon as your own memory is fairly well stored, you will find yourself most likely inventing signs of your own to assist it. In short, very rough notes are of great use to people of vivid minds; but as careful records in line are of infinitely more value, to any sort of mind whatever, it is always best to make them when it can be done.

The first thing, then, is almost always to secure all the leading lines, with all other significant ones.



Whether you leave things in the places in which you see them, or order them about, at least draw them *as* you see them, if not *where* you see them. Young sketchers of course lean too much on outline, especially on sky-lines, and learn to understand the anatomy of things in learning to express it. All previous knowledge of the laws of growth or the rudiments of geology will be invaluable. Every kind of information as to structure, in the artistic point of view, will be found in the fourth and fifth volumes of 'Modern Painters.' They will give the student all the knowledge which can be obtained by reading, and careful study of their illustrations and text is almost indispensable. The short manual called 'Letters on Drawing,' is a familiar abridgment of a vast quantity of the same matter, and is perhaps the best guide in existence for independent study of Nature. We think it should be taken up after Harding, however, as its directions are at first less tempting. Its advanced exercises, well done, will give the student some claim to the title of *Workman*.

Photography ought to be of the greatest service to all learners of landscape. It supplies them with any quantity of beautiful foreground material. It gives them forms of Alpine roses beyond the reach of school-boys, unlike those in 'Sesame and Lilies:' its ferns cannot be collected by fanciers; nor can donkeys browse upon its weeds. And more than this, photography enables young artists to study rocks coolly: not an easy thing to do in a general way. What is best of all, photographs of well-known views are always to be had; and any student may thus compare his own

work, in lines and coloured sketch, with all the true forms of his subject. No practice can be of more certain value than that of working out a subject already drawn from its photograph, first in light and shade, then in colour, at home, and with every advantage and assistance. We assume that a good etching in lines has been made on the spot, and that a second study has been made for the sake of the colours. Every one will see the advantage which the painter's memory must then gain from the use of a photograph of his subject. Many of Messrs. George and Edwards's Alpine plates might be made of endless service;—and a collection of small stereoscopic landscapes and studies should be always at hand, along with the brushes and colours. The Devil's Bridge on the S. Gothard is a capital instance. It is a difficult subject, not an impossible one: the rocks will always wait for everybody: you may leave out the new bridge if you please; there can be no mistake about the feeling of the scene. There is a capital small photograph of it; and every one has drawn it, from Turner downwards. He who has learnt to draw that precipice and foreground straightforwardly and correctly, and to give such conventional treatment to the infant wrath of Reuss, as shall put some of its roar into his drawing, has done something to speak of. And a close sketch on the spot, well worked up afterwards, will carry any willing workman far towards that end. It is strange, by the way, when one considers the hundreds of sketches which have been made of the old and new Devil's Bridge from below,—to think how seldom it has been even attempted from above. Mr. A. Hunt's

beautiful water-colour drawing, and another indifferent one by an unknown hand, are the only representations I know of the *whole* height of the rocks above the bridge and the fall below it, which are really not seen from below. It is clearly better to choose well-known and often-treated subjects for the sake of study. '*Difficile est proprie communia dicere.*' In all conscience it is hard enough: and one is enabled to compare one's attempts at stock subjects with abler men's, which is not only getting a lesson from Nature, but from them also. But be it remembered that the end of study is that a man shall be able to express himself, and have something of his own to express, and that he must push forward to subjects of his own. The world is all before him where to choose, and it is wide enough, and is fast becoming accessible enough. But at present we are talking of tools and materials, rules, models, and hints, pen-and-ink etching, and light and shade—not of all the wilderness unconquered of what is to be done, but of how to do one's best.

And when a certain power, i.e. correctness, fluency, subtlety and force of line, has been gained, by pen-and-ink, or hard-pencil drawing from Albert Durer or photograph, then we must needs say, Let the pupil take to the brush, and, generally speaking, stick to it. In the first place, all important or permanent works are done with a brush, and every willing worker has a chance of doing something one day which shall be of importance. Secondly, the feel and handling of a brush is different from the feel of a point; and if the hand be kept too exclusively at the latter, it will not learn the former. Thirdly, a water-colour

painter must learn (and an oil-painter will probably find it quite as necessary) to use the brush like a double-edged sword, and habitually to draw forms with both its sides. We go back to the old motto, 'Know what you have to do:' and say that, in theory, every touch in a picture should have a form which shall be the result of knowledge or design, and conduce to the effect of the whole work. Now, making significant touches of this kind with a brush is altogether different from making them with a hard point, inasmuch as a form is not the same thing as a line. And though point-drawing is absolutely necessary for years of practice, and for studies of pure form throughout life, still the more difficult faculty of using both sides of the brush and putting a whole form on at once is necessary to all good landscape drawing, and cannot be gained without long practice with the brush. It is a much subtler tool than the crayon or pen, and much more powerful; but for all that, elementary processes may be learnt by it as well as by the crayon. In as far as stippling and hatching are necessary to a work, they may be learnt with the brush; and a fine long-haired sable will draw as delicate and precise a line as a crow-quill, in practised hands. Besides, there is such a thing as being cramped and enslaved by lines: for, after all, Nature does not etch, but works by touches of shade and glazes of light. This we fear is a heresy in the view of our excellent Art-schools: but several of our leading painters are, we believe, inclined to recommend early use of the brush, in light and shade only; and to allow it to be employed in elementary studies: and Mr. Ruskin's instructions recognize it as soon as



steadiness and the power of gradation have been obtained in pen and ink. This may apply mainly to those who begin drawing comparatively late in life. No doubt children had better be kept to pencil and chalk drawing. But they and their elders too require encouragement as well as discipline; and the great encouragement in drawing is a little permitted waste of time with advanced tools. Every reader likes to look on a leaf or two ahead now and then.

This may be illustrated from the works of Turner. Art-schools were not in his day, or were not for him. He began as young men and maidens begin at our own time, by frankly trying to draw Nature and put on natural colour. He found it would not do. And so he began again, learning straight lines and accurate proportion by years of pencil outlines of architecture, and other matter; then he went through years of light and shade in water-colour; but he never resigned the brush from the first, until the life went out of his aged and cunning hands. He kept to *elementary colours*, but claimed the *workman's tools* from the first; and so we think others should do. It has been set forth already that as soon as the pupil has got on far enough to copy a cast, he ought to do it first in correct outline, then in water-colour or oil-monochrome. He may continue at this till he can do it well; that is to say, for months or years. But at the end of those years he will take up colour all the better for having learnt to lay shades on in *definitely shaped patches*; which is the great arcanum, of the original water-colourist at least. Turner's grey-paper sketches are allowed to be conclusive as models of rapid and

elaborate drawing. They will be found to be created by colour laid on in definite form. All the forms of the grass and vegetation on a hill-side are put in with rapid suggestive touches, in green and yellow, all of traceable and designed shape, but which look quite accidentally right. Then all the rocks which crop out are put in among them with another series of significant touches in dark grey and purple: and there is the work, with a pretty fair prospect of immortality while its paper holds together<sup>1</sup>.

Those who have gone over any considerable part, or who have even looked attentively through any fairly well-selected series of Turner's sketches, will have noticed, among many things, how very wide his range was for his time. Real Swiss and Italian landscape has hardly been attempted in water-colour till within the last twenty years. Nobody ever really drew a glacier before Turner's *Mer de Glace* in the '*Liber Studiorum*'—or for about fifty years after. Nor do we know of any real study of Italian landscape before his time; that is to say, of any close representation of its natural features. It will be admitted that whatever

<sup>1</sup> It would be of immense advantage to all students of Landscape Art if the Art-schools in some of our principal cities could be allowed for a time to possess connected series of Turner's drawings and sketches. These might be selected from the vast number in the National Collections, and entrusted to the schools for the use of somewhat advanced pupils. Any which shew his true manner of working—which was simple in itself, and complicated by reason of vast knowledge and extraordinary power of eye—would be of great value, especially to the more thoughtful students. The beautiful collection lately presented by Mr. Ruskin to the University of Oxford is a very perfect example of such an educational collection. Far fewer and less valuable specimens would give instruction which could hardly be obtained in any other way.

be the merits of the classical landscape, it will not furnish models or principles for the sketcher in our own days. But Turner was one of the earliest and farthest-ranging of travelling sketchers. It was probably the difficulties of locomotion in those days which forced upon him, what he always seems to have understood so much better than any one else before or after him—the vast difference between sketching on a journey, and painting at home with all conveniences. Railroads, steamers, Pre-Raphaelite principles, and portable tents and easels, have introduced far closer study of Nature in these days; and of course when we get in consequence such pictures as those of Brett, Inchbold, and the two surviving Hunts, we can only rejoice in the change. But now, as men gain this power of elaboration, they seem to lose their hope of rapid work. But this has its weakness as well as its strength. If no landscape is to be painted, or at least exhibited, which has not been painted entirely on the spot and in the open air; or if no subject is to be attempted which the artist is not certain he can master—then we have nothing more to say, and all we have said falls to the ground. With it goes all sane encouragement to sketchers as a class. With it goes Turner, and with him all the modern landscapists except the very latest, and the old masters are gone long ago. As a method of study, elaborate practice from Nature of course stands before all others; but it is impossible to consider it as a limit to landscape Art. This is especially true in our own time, when distant travel is open almost to every one, and when the resulting pictures are so intensely interesting, if they have anything like

faithful likeness and portraiture in them. Lewis and Holman Hunt have certainly painted elaborate Eastern scenes, which ought to be studied most attentively by every traveller who means drawing, either in city or desert. Seddon's picture at Kensington should be perused inch by inch, and so should Vacher's works in water-colour. But on an Eastern journey a man must draw many things as he can; that is to say, as carefully as time, sand, sun, mosquitoes, and Fellaheen will let him. The world will be glad of any true notes of what Sinai and Mount Hor are really like in colour and form. I remember a first Desert sketch, under the following circumstances. It was at Ayoun Mousa, opposite Suez, the scene of a very charming picture of Goodall's, where the figures are superior to the landscape<sup>1</sup>, and that is very beautiful. It was a wild sunset, such as I think is not seen except near the Poles or near the Tropics<sup>2</sup>. This is a note of it in pen and ink:—

‘A strange double scene, at the water's edge on the shallow shore. Dead calm, with an advancing tide fast

<sup>1</sup> It will be against our principles to disparage Mr. Goodall's picture for looking, as it does, as if it had been painted in Cairo or at home. But the girl's figure, though quite lovely, is that of an idealized Egyptian, and the man is not dark enough for a Tôr Arab, though his drawn and sharpened expression of thirst is admirable. But compare Lewis's great Sinai picture, or the lately exhibited scene in the Convent Court-yard in Cairo. The Bedouin there carry the *whole desert* in their faces, as well as in their subtly expressed repose up to the last moment, which indeed characterizes all Oriental men of action.

<sup>2</sup> I think the forms of cloud in the East (when one sees any cloud at all) and those in Arctic Norway are particularly beautiful and characteristic. They are certainly more sharply defined than elsewhere, both cirri and cumuli. The Northern sunset colour is quite equal to the Eastern, indeed some of its nameless crimsons are unequalled. Fused rubies might be something like them.



swallowing up the flat beach, and filling various "still salt pools, locked in by bars of sand," almost without a ripple. Looking east, these pools reflected the rose-coloured mountains of the Tih (Desert of Wanderings), monotonous in form, yet many crested, and all flaming with the red sun which was going down in all his strength behind Gebl Attakah. All the crystals and mica in the plain sparkled red: the yellow sands were touched with vermilion, and the whole was reflected and repeated at one's feet in the broad shallow pools. Turning round, there was another picture: the long line of Gebl Attakah, deep solemn purple, and long banks of barred clouds now flushed in pure crimsons, undescribable and inconceivable; soon to exchange their many colours for soft gradation, from white moonlight to the purple blackness of Eastern darkness.'

I had got off my camel, and made some sort of outline, and was beginning to try tints, when there came a gentle puff of the wind of the desert, and raised a small simoon of dust which in one instant filled all my tin colour-box, speckled all my first wash over, made all my brushes, &c., gritty for ever so long, and gave me a first lesson in a sketcher's Oriental troubles. After that I did what most men will have to do—made careful outlines with a hard pencil, and matched tints with the brush on the spot; or even wrote down the names of the actual paints I would use—and laid colours on in tents.

There are subjects enough in the Sinai desert alone to give an able sketcher employment for years; and he might hope to produce pictures which would have a real value, and in time would be felt to possess it.

Photographs give a good idea of the mountain range itself, but hardly of the extent and theatric slope of the Plain of the Camp, which fronts Râs Sassafeh, or Sinai proper, slope above slope and plateau above plateau, till the Hill of the Law seems to be the chief object of sight to every one who stands in the plain, and till one feels that to stand there is to 'stand before the Mount' in a special sense<sup>1</sup>. Then the glorious view from Mount S. Catharine, and the still more interesting one from the highest precipices of Sinai itself, have been only recorded, as far as we know, by two feeble water-colours, one in the Royal Academy of 1865 and one in the Exhibition of British Artists last year. Again, there is the great waste of sands facing the Mount of Deliverance, to which Lewis and Goodall have only done partial justice; neither of them dwelling on the vast sweep or golden colours of that most melancholy shore, but the one on his perfectly realized group of Bedouins, the other on his most prettily idealized girl and camel-driver. Then there is the deserted hill-top of Surabut-el-Khadem, with its blood-red sandstone flaming across the Debbet-er-Ramleh at sunset and sunrise; and chief of all there is Feiran, the great oasis, the loveliest place on earth. Nor has Petra ever received anything like justice: and though the strong hand of Holman Hunt has been stretched over the Dead Sea, Gennesaret remains; and somebody ought to give an idea of its beauty. Perhaps one man only, Mr. Lear, has thrown himself with the true landscape spirit on the scenery of the East, and

<sup>1</sup> One of Mr. Frith's photographs shews this admirably.

has not degraded it into mere background for Bedouin and dragomen, goats, camels, and chibouques, and tarbooshes, and papooshes, and all the rest of it. His works seem almost invaluable as rapid and accurate records of Eastern Nature; but they are sadly 'ill to find.' Roberts's sketches are of course valuable as far as they go; but they will not seem to go far enough, to any one whose eye has been educated to accurate observation of Nature, whether by Pre-Raphaelitism, which is accuracy in foreground objects as seen; or by Turner, who represents accuracy in distances as seen under various circumstances; or even by the study of Brett's works, which represent supreme accuracy in both foreground and distance; with change, motion, and imaginative force in some degree sacrificed to it.

It seems to me that the coast and fiord scenery of Norway are opening an almost boundless field to our landscape painters. Mr. West's waterfalls are admirable, and Mr. Rosenberg has from time to time produced some very true and pleasing drawings of Norse subject. But neither of them dwell on the sea; and it is the eternal comparison of the sea and mountains which gives their peculiar charm and power to the coasts of Scotland and Norway. That power is vaguely felt even by the dullest tourist, and often commented on in words: but it is hardly expressed in Art, unless it be by Turner, and latterly in some of the Harlech drawings of Mr. A. Hunt. Contrast is felt between the solidity of earth and the changing mirror of water, in time of calm, when Loch Hourn or the Hardanger-fiord are as blue steel or glass,

reflecting all the wounds of the battered giants which hold them bound in bars of stone. Again, there is the contrast of elemental combat, when the Western trumpets sound onset, and the sea rises mountainously in forms which mock, with their eternal wrath and change, the granite pyramids that alter not. And the restless tide with its ordered power of motion is continually at work, cleaving and smoothing, building and undermining, stripping and clothing, rending and closing, full of life and of destruction, Change itself personified: and so it contrasts with the hills which look so immovable, yet slowly yield to change. The really grand amount of what is called Feeling in modern English landscape-painting shews how possible, and perhaps easy, it is to illustrate and suggest trains of thought like this by landscape: and every one who has the gift of doing this does wrong in not labouring for so much technical skill, as shall enable him to do it clearly and impressively.

For every licence in rapid sketching must be paid for, or rather anticipated by, accurate study of form at home, and by thoughtful observation on the spot. No one can hope ever to paint his impressions or realize them intelligibly, if he does not strive in every way to clear and deepen them as he receives them, to think them over and analyze them, to study the scene which has touched his spirit. Then every line or touch in his drawing will be the symbol of a thought, and either mean something, or be a necessary part of a meaning. Practice of this kind and in this spirit fully justifies hasty sketching. Such haste is not carelessness; for accuracy and finish are nothing



more in any picture than additions of well-chosen thoughts and facts, made in a skilful way, intelligently and intelligibly. And observant sketching is of all things the best to educate the mind, eye, and hand into right selection and clear and copious expression of congruous facts in a picture; that is to say, of facts which all fall in with and intensify or ornament the motive or theme of a picture. For every important landscape has its theme, recurring again and again to the musing mind of the artist, brought out again and again in fresh lights and new colours and relations, with fresh notes to introduce it, to throw it out, to vary and recall it. It is useless to follow the close analogy between light and shade and colour in painting and the same in music; or try to analyze how strangely harmony and contrast, change and repose, are brought in on the spirit of man by these sister arts. For painters rightly prefer expression to analysis, and represent things rather than take them to pieces. The value of their work depends on the amount of the inexpressible which they manage to express in it: and the importance of success makes carelessness in pursuit quite inexcusable. The only reason for which a person of sense can want to draw 'a little' is that he may be led to want to draw more, and to proceed from trifling successes, which please himself and his friends, to serious and probably laborious efforts, by which his friends and he may learn something. Life is too short to fiddle with anything, least of all with Art; and it is the sense of this which sets such a barrier between artists and

amateurs. The former feel that they are giving their lives to what the others care but little about, and feel that the public think their lives are passed in pursuing a mere amusement, while they are really straining every mental nerve all day long. 'I amuse myself with Art,' says the regular amateur, washing and sponging away at his copy of Rowbotham. Real Art is not amusing, thinks the workman labouring out his thoughts; it is a weariness, like the sea that spreads ever wider<sup>1</sup>. It takes too much work and life out of man to be treated as a bye-play—it rather deserves to be pursued alone, without "parerga" to distract a man's mind from it<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Tintoret.

<sup>2</sup> Arist. Eth. Nic.





Cephalopoda & Proxys.

From a sketch by J.M.W. Turner



## CHAPTER VIII.

## TREE-DRAWING.

A FEW remarks on Tree-drawing seems a necessary addition to the chapter on Sketching, as trees are almost invariably the first objects which a student attempts to draw from Nature out of doors, and as they first meet him with all the embarrassments of regular open-air work. The amateur says he or she finds trees very difficult—the regular workman knows that they are in fact impossible, as no human labour or power can render their intricacy, their change, their character, and subtle motion. It will be of great use to any student to watch and make occasional sketches of the same tree or group of trees in different weathers, and at different seasons. Any one who will do so will see that it is impossible for us to exhaust the subject of tree-drawing here; or indeed to give more than one good example of the best conventionalism, and a few hints for practice. Without a large number of illustrations in colour it would be impossible to demonstrate the changes and varied beauty of leaves and branches; and every attentive person may see them all for himself from month to month. These pages have been almost entirely taken up with recipe and practical rules, excepting when they have been engaged on matters of history: and little, after all, has been said

of the habit of artistic observation or note-taking; though the importance of a well-stored memory has been everywhere assumed. Country life and habits of course give more and better opportunities of collecting natural knowledge; though it often happens that the habitual dweller in cities is more observant, because of the keener pleasure he feels in less-accustomed beauty. But all may have plenty of opportunities for watching the differences between bare branches, red and purple with buds soon to open, and wintry branches forgetful of sap and circulation; or the same boughs fringed and powdered over with bursting green points; or, again, scantily clothed at first with emerald green in spring; or full-dressed in early summer, with delicate yellow-green, their strong boles and main branches telling dark among the leaves;—or again, in the deep strength of August growth, when grey, or green lichened, stems are lighter than foliage bronzed with long sunshine; or with the first fringes and sparks of September yellow defining every form, and adding beauty to beauty;—or again, as summer black-green, ‘faded yet full,’ glows out in brown and orange and russet and scarlet, and the whole orchestra of colour bursts out with a crash, before the challenge of the autumn winds, and before golden leaves, like

‘Golden lads and girls, all must

Pass away and turn to dust.’

To watch these changes for a year, and their various effect on different trees, will give any man a kind of fruitful knowledge of the look and the ways of oak and ash and thorn. He will take to them and

swear by their names as of old: and when he draws them, there will be a spirit and character in his work:—and if he has anyhow followed our former directions within doors, he will have secured himself a fair turn of skill and precision as well.

For rules have really been given for tree-drawing as for all other work. Make your mind up steadily and irrevocably to the form you will have in your picture; whether it be a motionless form, such as you can sit and study in the open air for weeks, or if it be the wild struggling lines of a tree in storm, which you must fix on your mind at a glance. Decide on it, block it out, draw it in, firmly or finely. You must, as a rule, lay on this form flat, in your lightest tint of colour first; or you can begin with the half-tint, leaving out the high lights and strong darks, and fitting them in afterwards like a mosaic. If you are using autumn tints and want high colour, lay on the first form in yellow and sienna, and paint scarlets, purples, and browns into it, attending to form in all your touches. Or if you are putting in masses in distance, a half-tint first may be most convenient, and the lights may be taken out and painted over. But in all cases, knowledge of form is everything: knowledge, that is to say, first of the typical shape and form of leaves and masses in each tree, and secondly of the broad principles of growth, in which all trees seem to be agreed. The fifth volume of 'Modern Painters' is a perfect and complete book of reference on the latter subject. And all the chapters which describe the way in which a tree builds itself up shoot by shoot and year by year; its difficulties,

compromises, loss and gain; especially how it contains the record of all in its wood, and carries its own history, are as exact in truth, as they are instructive in the noble analogies which they suggest. Nothing in this part of 'Modern Painters' should be omitted: and all who have time should verify Mr. Ruskin's observations from Nature. But for first lessons in tree-drawing, valuable help is to be got from the works of Harding. All who are beginning to sketch out of doors will find his Lessons on Trees very useful at first. They help one to a graceful and intelligible conventionalism of form; and his more advanced lithographic drawings may be copied in sepia, or even translated into colour. We wish our student to advance beyond them, and to gain power of original tree-drawing; for the fact is, that it will not do to rest as a contented disciple of Harding; it is quite possible to be able to have acquired some power of expressing tree-form in his language, and yet to be quite unable to go out and make even a tolerable study of an actual tree, in a veritable park or forest. But his system of drawing a tree is the same as that which we have already given for drawing the figure. First the stem and main branches, which determine the form of the masses of leaves, are blocked out or perhaps drawn. Then the forms of the masses of foliage are outlined with broad waving curves, which are afterwards filled up with the leaves and boughs; the shade being put in afterwards with great attention to form and character. Harding's use of definite forms of shade is everywhere highly instructive, and his lithographs of the under or shaded side of branches



alone, without outline, ought to be well studied. A little practice in free-hand drawing will enable the student to understand and imitate the wild and graceful curves of his foliage: but at the same time he must always try to verify the works he copies from Nature: to find and study oaks and elms like his master's. Nothing can give so good an insight into the work of both master and pupil.

Harding takes the foliage of the elm as his typical form, shewing that others may be learnt from it with slight alteration. It seems to us that the hand-shape, which is his conventional type-form for a bunch of leaves, is rather more like the ash. Photography and the increased demand for accurate drawing certainly make it necessary for both painters and students to attempt further realization, and press on to the study of Titian<sup>1</sup> and Turner. But a sketcher should practise Harding's curves and radiating bunches till his hand will produce them correctly and quite easily: he will then find it easy to alter their form and make them as angular as oak-boughs, as long and delicate as birch, as soft as willow, and as sharp as holly; and he will also learn easy expressions for the radiating leaves of chestnut, and the needles of spruce and pine. But he will never draw masses till he has drawn leaves: and the real way to take up tree-drawing, after a little copying from Harding, is to take a spray of not more than seven leaves and copy it faithfully twice, in light and shade, and afterwards in colour. Then another of a cluster of

<sup>1</sup> Among Mr. Philpot's Florentine photographs are some very beautiful tree-drawings by Titian.

leaves on a bough, about eighteen inches long, set up eight feet from the eye. Let it be drawn at first in profile or long-ways as a mass, running the leaves into each other where they cross each other, and making their form well out: then again, look at them end on, and draw them foreshortened,—in both cases paying great attention to the spring of the boughs. Two plates in ‘Modern Painters,’ vol. v., called ‘The Dryad’s Toil’ and ‘The Dryad’s Waywardness’ are beautiful examples of this method of study, and any one who follows it faithfully is likely to gain the great and rare power of giving a look of vitality and growth to his near foliage. And all in distance or middle-distance is easy to him who can make a successful struggle with his nearer sprays.

This work may be done in chalk, though we prefer a quill-pen and ink or colour for it, with a wash of sepia in different shades afterwards. Let the sketcher begin to work in sepia after the manner of Turner’s ‘Liber Studiorum.’ And when he has made fair progress, so that he knows enough about trees to understand and delight in that work, then let him take up some of its plates, and do his best with them—tracing their lines if he will, or accurately blocking out and copying them; or it may be better to trace them in pencil and go over the lines again in ink with careful imitation of the copy. This last seems almost the best method of facsimile-ing Turner’s lines; and nothing short of a facsimile ought to content a trained draughtsman studying trees of the great master of woodland.

It is very possible that you may not like the ‘Liber

Studiorum' etching given in this chapter for study and for copying (it should be done at twice its size here). But have faith, and practise it over and over again. When you can outline some of its groups freely and exactly, and command your pen or pencil so as to imitate some of its bunches of foliage freely, you will have gained a power of sketching trees in outline which will avail you wherever you go. Turner will teach you to express the character, habits, and perhaps the history, of the favourite English trees in particular; and also, perhaps with slightly diminished power, of the Swiss or spruce fir, the stone pine, the cypress, and Spanish chestnut. And no one can copy his lines without gathering vigour of expression from them. To appreciate them thoroughly requires a fair degree of knowledge both of trees and of drawing; but every one who has learnt really to like them will find his own work always more graphic, and his choice of leading lines more accurate and telling. He will see at all events that every touch of Turner's is a thought, or new idea; that the forms are not, as Harding's sometimes are, graceful repetitions of a type in the mind, but all distinct inventions or recollections, drawn from a kind of internal sea of knowledge. In other words, the thought follows the hand, or rather guides it, so closely in his work, that imitating it must necessarily add to one's knowledge. All that is said about a man's peculiar touch or style, as has been said, means no more than his special way of expressing special facts which he is especially fond of or familiar with; and nothing can prove this more satisfactorily than the etched lines of the 'Liber Studiorum.'

A few scales of colour for trees at different seasons may be inserted here. We do not mean to say they are the best, but they will do to begin with, and may be varied according to feeling and experience.

In spring, the highest or purest greens will be best matched with a mixture of emerald green and gamboge; which may be warmed with a little burnt sienna, and deepened and shaded with small admixtures of Indian red and indigo or Prussian blue. This is for foreground: as the trees retire into middle-distance, cobalt, with a little white, should be substituted for the indigo; and in extreme distance the green must pass almost into yellow ochre for masses of sunshine, and into grey for shadow—the best and purest grey of distance in almost all cases will be found in some combination of cobalt or ultramarine ash with rose madder. Again, the strongest and smallest touches of deep transparent shade in foreground may be put in by adding lake or Vandyke brown to the deepest greens. A lighter tint of the same will do well for *shadowed* parts of the larger stems and branches: for where light plays on them, and dapples them, it must be fearlessly represented in yellow or green, perhaps only a shade or two darker than the bright leaves. Correct grammar of colour, as has so often been said, is impossible where near or bright light is concerned.

Summer leaves are dark, and the Prussian blue, raw or burnt sienna, and Indian red, will come into the yellows and pale greens in larger proportion; or the useful mixture of raw sienna, cobalt, and brown madder may be used to vary it, in masses of shade. Of course the nearer the shade is brought to the eye the clearer



it ought to look, and the more it must be represented by transparent colours.

Autumn colour may be anything: as the emerald green reappears (with the brightest chromes) in the fading tints of lime, aspen, and poplar leaves; while other trees may vary from dark brown to absolutely burning scarlet under sunset light. We have seen birches and beeches look absolutely like pillars of fire on October evenings. But one of the most singular effects of contrasted colour we ever beheld, at least in the course of the last twenty years, was from a place familiar to many of our readers—no other than the towing-path of the Isis, opposite the ‘bouquet’ or ‘bosquet’ (either word will do) of small elms and alders on the projecting Oxfordshire bank below Iffley Mill. There were the clear flames of a scarlet sunset over Bagley, just at their brightest; every leaf of the Iffley trees was like a plate of red-hot gold: and they were so broad and still, that little change or shade was noticeable: below, towards the water, they sobered into bright yellow and red-brown, and then the hollows of the shaded bank formed a dark neutral contrast. They were reflected clearly in very dark, clear olive green autumnal water, which caught the aquamarine light of the sky in its few and regular ripples. Behind the trees there was crystalline turquoise-green sky, quite cloudless, pure cold light against clear fire; and in the sky was a broad clear full-moon, rising in slow strength, trembling above the scarlet flashes in the faint undulation of the dark river. I remember no such other effect of colour in a flat country; but parallel scenes

are easy to find, and I have put down a reminiscence of it here, thinking that some one may watch this autumn for a like effect. Cadmium, carmine, and emerald green, mitigated with cobalt and glazed with yellow light<sup>1</sup>, would have to be used copiously, with smalt, I think, in the shadow-purples.

It is very difficult to find any type of pine-drawing which can be recommended as not only perfect, but complete in instructiveness. The spruce firs in the corner of Turner's 'Source of the Arveiron' are perfect, but they do not contain all about the pine. As Mr. Ruskin remarks, they are pines in an abnormal condition, pushed from off their natural perpendicular by the thrust of the near glacier and its moraine-stones. But they have all the character of the pine in them: and the broad stone-pines of other plates 'are all-sufficient. Some of Calame's lithographs of Swiss fir are picturesque and good as far as they go. In drawing the forms of a well-grown spruce, the idea of successive plates or tables of verdure all round it, very like spread hands on all sides<sup>2</sup>, may help the student; at all events it will preserve him from approach to the old type of a straight stick with two rows of horizontal arms, like a flat-fish's bones. For colour, you may descend from emerald green and gamboge, through any admixture of Indian red and indigo, to purple and Vandyke

<sup>1</sup> Yellow ochre—for cadmium and emerald green will not mix, but destroy each other. Yellow madder, with various blues, makes lovely warm greens.

<sup>2</sup> Knowledge of perspective, or that unconscious attention to its rules which is produced by the habit of careful drawing, is of special value in dealing with fir-branches. We have already insisted on it in requiring the pupil to draw branches both ways, in profile and 'end on' to himself.

brown in deep shade *under* the branches. But it must be noticed that all pines turn purple, or steel-blue at least (brown madder and cobalt), at comparatively short distances, and that the far-off pine may *be* dark green, but does not *look* dark green, but purple, *when you come to match the colour*.

Therefore, and finally, let the student at all times manfully match his colours for himself from Nature, by holding up his hues in shade against the object. If he will do this, or try to do it, in all landscape study, he will find himself painting, out of his own head, in colours something like Turner's: nor can any happier discovery for a young colourist well be imagined. To tree-drawing there is no end, and the student ought now to be able to begin it for himself: and in all early stages of his work he cannot go wrong in consulting the many beautiful studies of foliage to be found in our Water-colour Exhibitions. Let him not try to pick up anybody's touch or anybody's favourite effect; but go straightforwardly to any picture in which he recognizes a natural effect, and ask it how its author did his work. In water-colour he will generally be able to discover this well enough; and lessons so obtained will make his visits to the galleries profitable enough to him, till he is strong enough to have a will and a way of his own. For the illustration 'Cephalus and Procris' I have to thank Mr. Ruskin, to whom so much is due already in this book. It has been selected for various reasons, after some deliberation. I may mention that it is a photograph from one of those extremely rare etchings by Turner's own hand, which were taken in limited number from the plates of the

'*Liber Studiorum*' before the mezzotint ground was laid upon them. An attempt to explain the process by which these plates were produced may be made here, as an account of etching and mezzotint engraving is not altogether out of place; and I never yet found any ordinary Englishman, amateur draughtsman or not, who understood what mezzotint engraving means, unless it was his trade.

These plates were first etched, i. e. Turner took the bright piece of copper, heated it, melted some wax thinly on to it, and smoked the coating of wax over a candle till it was quite even and black. Then he probably set his original sketch (they are all at South Kensington) before a looking-glass, and drew it thus reversed, on the wax covering—scratching and digging vigorously through to the metal<sup>1</sup>. Then he poured aquafortis on the plate<sup>2</sup>, which 'bit' into the metal along the lines, and left the wax. On wiping off his wax ground with the help of oil, he thus had the lines of his sketch, drawn with his own hand deeply in the copper. The plate then went into the hands of the engraver, who 'grounded it,' i. e. went over it repeatedly with a fine-toothed instrument like a small curry-comb, till its surface was evenly and perfectly destroyed or roughened all over. In this state it would have

<sup>1</sup> The student may make a tracing first on the waxed plate, reversing his transparent-paper copy to get its lines in reverse.

<sup>2</sup> The best way is to make a wall of wax round the edges, and pour on the corrosive, which will bubble as it does its work. The time of active operation, from the first general bubbling, varies, according as you are etching on copper or steel. Firm lines will take an hour to bite, in copper: on steel, three or four minutes will suffice, in a warm room.



uniformly printed as black as ink, and even the deep-bitten lines of the etching would have been hardly visible<sup>1</sup>. But Turner himself, or some engraver with his help, would now scrape away the lights and paler shades, with a thin sharp erasing-knife, until the high lights shewed a perfectly bright surface of metal once more; and till other parts were so far polished as to retain the right quantity of ink, and print no darker than he wished. Successive proofs would of course be taken to test the process, until the whole plate was finished to Turner's satisfaction. It printed like a drawing in light and shade, with the original etching telling out vigorously as a skeleton of the whole. The photograph is from the plate as it first left Turner's hands, before the mezzotint ground was laid; when it was a bright sheet of copper with the etched lines upon it. The mezzotint plate resembles a dim light-and-shade drawing.

The tree-trunks are the great objects of study in 'Cephalus and Procris:' but the foliage-drawing ought to be traced and gone over repeatedly till you can follow its changes faithfully. It is no use drawing nonsense-foliage; and simple imitation of Harding is sure to end in merely flourishing away with his radiating bunches in a quite senseless way. Turner's leaves have all different turns in them and do not lie one over another like scales, and this alone would make them the best known type of conventional tree-drawing. All tree-drawing is conventional, we say;

<sup>1</sup> I have to thank Mr. Lupton, the well-known engraver, for some kind instruction in mezzotint, ten years ago.

but a highly expressive style of doing it in line, once gained, will lead you to the highest possible realization. Notice in particular the spring of the lower foliage and brushwood round the trunks; and how much is conveyed in all their lines: and above all, compare the figures with the trees. It is easy for any person with eyes in his head to understand the languor of coming death in the form of the fainting nymph, and the clasp of the husband's arm, and the hand which dares not draw out the bitter arrow: and above all, the distress and apprehension expressed by the ears and back of the hound. Feeling this, you will gradually see also how all the clusters of vegetation express minor facts in their smaller and subtler way; and understand how great is the sum of graphic power in those broad lines. It is a question how far the light and shade in the plate adds to their power, as given in our photograph: much is gained by it, but something is lost; and the longer one looks at the pure lines the more one will feel their absolute sufficiency, and the difficulty of estimating the measureless power of mind and hand which produced them.

## CHAPTER IX.

## PROCESSES OF WALL-PAINTING.

AS the words 'Fresco' and 'Tempera' have been repeatedly used in these pages, some little account of them seems necessary. It seems beyond the scope of an elementary book to attempt any detailed description of the processes, or give any special rules. Michael Angelo's saying about pure fresco, 'that it is work for men, and oil-painting for women or sedentary persons,' may be the text of our excuse. This book is not for thorough workmen or masters; and fresco ought in theory to be used by the most highly trained and powerful painters. The ideal master ought, one would say, to amass knowledge of form and colour, materials and vehicles, by the use of oil and water-colour; and then to have opportunities of shewing his full powers by being made to work at their full stretch, under the difficult, but most exciting and stimulating, conditions of pure fresco. Having acquired full power of expressing whatever is in him, he shall be called on to express it with pithy force and splendid brevity: he shall speak like a Spartan, with trenchant meaning and without ornament, or recall, or possibility of retouching. It was the excitement which attaches to pure fresco which made the great master pronounce so strongly in its favour.

And what renders his words decisive is the fact that they were uttered while he was labouring on those paintings in the Sistine, which produced so great an effect on the mind of Rafael, in the midst of his own labours in fresco. For Rafael's third or Roman style, whether it was in him a change for the better or not, really dates from the influence of Michael Angelo on his mind. It will hardly do to say that Rafael's vast reputation owes much to the beauty of his character, mind, and even person; for that would seem to detract from the fame due to his works. But we have often thought that the special beauties of all his paintings (unless it be the too academic Transfiguration, and others of the latest period) have a certain relation to the tender deep-eyed face in the Uffizii, and the other portraits of him<sup>1</sup>. But if he needed eternal honour, his tribute to the mighty Angelo, whom meaner men hated and thwarted, would secure it him effectually, 'I thank God that I have lived in the time of Michael Angelo.' And doubtless his own fame as a painter, no less than Buonarotti's, will depend on his frescoes in the Stanze of the Vatican, rather than on works in oil. We judge of men's strength, after all, by trial in regular *tours de force*; and fresco is such a trial to a painter. We hope many of our students may live to shew their powers in it. But we can only give a brief account of different terms connected with the subject of mural decoration. We dismiss at once the popular use of the word 'fresco'

<sup>1</sup> One of the most significant and beautiful is the very early drawing by his own hands in the Randolph Gallery at Oxford.



as expressive of *all* sorts of wall-painting indiscriminately, and proceed to distinguish in two ways: according to the ground used *for* the colours, and the medium used *with* the colours. The broad principle of division is into tempera—any medium, on dry plaster; and fresco—water-colours on wet plaster. We will take the most frequently used names the first, though tempera is far the most ancient and universal process. Pure fresco, or *buon fresco*, is painting with colours made up with water and lime, on a *fresh laid* plaster of silver-sand and lime. Everything must be completed while the ground is moist; and it dries rapidly: hence it admits of no retouching, and a large work has to be done in patches: so that the painter has additional difficulty in concealing his joinings between one day's work and another.

The last coat of plaster, on which the colours are laid, is called intonaco. The colours used must of course be those only which are not affected by lime: but calcined gypsum, or plaster of Paris, is said to answer as well as lime, without injuring the more delicate hues, whether it be used as intonaco or worked up with the colours. This is the true fresco of the great masters, at the end of the fourteenth century: on the *freshly spread* plaster of a wall.

*Fresco secco*—dry fresco, half fresco, or Florentine fresco, is on dry or old plaster. Lime is used with the colours, and the plaster is well wetted overnight and during the painting. The colours dry into the lime perfectly, and are quite durable, but they have not the brightness and transparency of real fresco. This method is preferred, however, for ornamental paintings, as it

has the advantage of requiring no joinings, like true fresco, and the complicated forms of ornament make it impossible to bring the joinings to the outlines, which is the best way of disguising them. There is a picture in fresco secco by Giotto in the National Gallery (No. 276), Two Apostles, taken from the chapel of S. John Baptist in the Carmine at Florence.

These two methods may be, and in fact always have been, combined in various ways. Buon fresco joinings are painted over in dry fresco; or a whole design is laid hastily in in buon fresco and completed at leisure after it is dry. This avoids the joinings, and seems to be a good method for works of ordinary size. Michael Angelo's frescoes in the Sistine are retouched at the joinings with methodical and careful hatchings in parallel lines: but this was probably done in tempera.

As it is extremely difficult to gradate a coat of colour in fresco, or even to get a flat tint over a large space, the processes of hatching and stippling are of great importance to the painter. Our chapters on Chalk Drawing and on Finish may be referred to on these points. But the advanced student will find in all his painting, that very much is to be done by varying the hue with which he stipples. No rules can be given for the process. He must take every opportunity of observing the works of the late W. Hunt, and noticing how particles of contrasted colour are used in them. There are frequent passages in Turner's water-colours, from shade to light (as in storm-clouds against the sun) which are stippled or worked with great exactness of touch, and gradated change of colour from cold to warm; the shade being purple on the dark side of the cloud, and

brown, deep yellow, or pale crimson on the light: still telling as form and drawing. One such passage well studied, with attempts to imitate it, will teach the painter much, and enable him to learn more.

The word 'tempera' means any medium or vehicle, except plain oil or plain water, both of which are conventionally distinguished from it. The use of either of them is now understood to be an entirely different thing from what is called Painting in Tempera. The first general idea which that expression conveys, is painting on a dry—perfectly dry—wall with opaque colours made up with size, egg, milk, or gum—principally the former. It is then called 'distemper,' and employed in scene-painting. Yolk and white of egg, generally kept till very thick and offensive (hence painting *à putrido*), was the favourite vehicle in the earliest times, up to the Van Eycks' discoveries, about 1410<sup>1</sup>. One of the two brothers Hubert and John Van Eyck is said to have 'discovered oil painting.' What he, or they, did to improve oil-painting (which had been practised long before, as Ghiberti states that Giotto painted in oil, and Cennini's 'Treatise on Painting,' A.D. 1437, says much of the use of various oils) is summed up to the following effect by Messrs. Gullick and Timbs, in their most useful and readable book on Painting:—'The great difficulty, of Northern painters

<sup>1</sup> Yolk of egg may be employed in water-colour with capital results, as follows:—Wherever very sharp lights are wanted, as in the illuminated edges of sunset clouds, in foreground grasses or leaves, &c., it is well to paint them in sharply with yolk of egg at the very beginning, before the washes are put on. When the high lights are wanted, the skin of egg-substance will peel off them quite easily, and leave them in pure white, to be tinted at pleasure.

in particular, was to find a varnish which would dry in the shade; what is called "a drier" to mix with the oils. His chemical knowledge enabled him to hit on amber, and find means of dissolving it in oil. Secondly, the varnish and medium thus obtained was so nearly colourless, that he was able to use it with light-toned opaque colours, so as not to lose their purity. Hence he was enabled to proceed to thick painting, "impasting," or laying on solid lights, as has been practised ever since.'

Tempera, however, with glue, or yolk and white of eggs, diluted with fig-juice or vinegar, may be said to be the original vehicle of modern painting. Cimabue and Giotto, Orcagna and Angelico all worked in it; and Ghirlandajo hovered between it and the fresco which adorns the Santa Trinita and the Carmine. Masaccio had preceded him, and Benozzo Gozzoli; but he must always be considered Chief of the Frescanti.

The word 'gesso' is sometimes used to the confusion of the few daring spirits of the lay world who take up practical Art-books: we think we have seen the expression 'Painting *in gesso*.' Painting *on gesso* would be more correct; the word simply means white plaster of Paris, used with size for the tempera ground to receive colours, whether it be spread thickly over panels or walls, or thinly on canvas. It is always used in preparing grounds, on any material or for any vehicle.

All these processes of course require great preparation. The chief point is the memory and skill, the experience and inspiration of the painter, set fully on his mettle, and required to do in a day work which may stand for centuries. Some Italian painters are



said to have worked at once on the plaster surface : but any one in his senses, in modern days, will have first prepared a chalk or charcoal cartoon of the form in light and shade, of the size contemplated, and then a coloured copy of the same on paper or canvas<sup>1</sup>: besides studying all the more complicated parts. When he comes to face the wall he is to render a sweet and lovely wall, he must cut his cartoon into pieces of such size as he can finish in a day, pin them to the wet wall, prick through them along the lines, and pounce the holes with red or black dust: or he may indent lines if he will. He will then have a complete outline, and has only to paint with a strong hand.

We must refer our readers to Messrs. Gullick and Timbs, and to their references, for some highly interesting remarks about the partial use of water-and-size, or distemper grounding for oil-paintings, with their first coats of colour. 'This partial use of water-colours,' they observe, 'which is generally confined to the preparatory stages of the picture, recommends itself by giving the artist greater facility in those stages, and by the greater purity it secures to the superimposed oil-colour. Nearly all the Venetian painters are believed to have used this mixed method. It is known that the clear blues in the pictures of Paul Veronese were painted in distemper and afterwards varnished.' A quotation follows from Burnet's 'Essays on the Fine Arts:' which states that Correggio and Giorgione managed, by this use of tempera and oil together, to have the light portions of their pictures

<sup>1</sup> It is almost indispensable to have a coloured sketch in fresco.

without oleaginous substance at all, yet not to lose unctuousness and transparency in their shadows. The tempera lights remain, but the shadows are much cracked and darkened — the water not having had enough size in it<sup>1</sup>. Titian and Tintoret seem to have made the same combination, and Rubens especially got much of the brilliancy of his landscape from using a white water-colour ground *under* his oil-painting. Velasquez and Vandyke, and finally Sir Joshua Reynolds, worked thus; the latter unfortunately in many cases using water-colour *over* the oil-painting; which ensures contraction and cracking to a ruinous extent. This is probably the chief reason why so many of Turner's grandest works are perishing so entirely. 'In Etty,' Mr. Burnet continues, 'we have the true Venetian cracky substance of water-colour with the rich and transparent glazings of oil: Wilkie also possessed this quality in a very high degree.'

It is easy and pleasant to paint in oil on a dry plastered wall which has had a few coats of paint spread over it. This is the only wall-painting we ever practised. Turpentine should be used with common oil-colours, and the painter may proceed as in water-colour.

*Encaustic* painting, we believe, is laying a ground of colours made up with wax, and afterwards glazing the work by means of heat. For a full description of

<sup>1</sup> A hasty but convenient method for scene-painting is the use of gum-water as a medium with water-colours, and on plain calico. The process is simply that of water-colour, and the work may be rolled up when dry and treated anyhow while it is kept dry. Thick gum-water has much of the force of oil in transparent shade. Ox-gall mixed with water-colour will make it work freely on almost any surface.

its processes, to any one who has to practise it, we must refer to Messrs. Gullick and Timbs, to whom we owe nearly the whole of this short chapter.

In conclusion, we cannot hope that all or a large proportion of those who read this book will ever come to paint in fresco. Yet almost all our ground-maxims of study and practice would be contained in the advice to work as if one was training for such work. The stored memory, keen sure eye, and trained hand; precision, decision, and the inner vision of what you mean to do, before it is done; these things make a painter in any vehicle. And we think any one who shall have really given the first three chapters of the practical part of this book a fair trial, will find himself advancing towards full possession of these qualities.

The annexed letter from Mr. Stanhope expresses the substance of our chapter so pithily that we cannot help inserting it:—

‘MY DEAR ———

‘Fresco is painting in water-colours on wet plaster: the vehicle used with the colours is pure water. When the plaster has set, the colour cannot be washed off; that and its luminous qualities are the chief advantages of fresco; the disadvantage is that only a limited number of colours can be used, as the wet lime is destructive to many colours. It is not, therefore, suited to elaborate work, but to large spaces where simple colours suffice. Tempera or distemper is painting on a dry wall with water-colours, using size as a medium. The size is to bind the colours sufficiently to prevent their dusting off; but of course it is no protection against wet. Any colours may be used in tempera painting, but the effect is not so luminous as that of genuine fresco. It is pretty generally believed by artists that the Venetian School painted in tempera on

canvases prepared with a gesso or plaster ground, and finished up with oil-colours, by that means combining the advantages of both methods. I am about to try that plan: Watts has reintroduced it, and many artists are adopting it. I can tell you nothing about the water-glass process, as I have not tried it. I believe either Herbert or Martin have used it in their wall-paintings in the Houses of Parliament.

‘Yours &c.

‘J. R. SPENCER STANHOPE.’



## CHAPTER X.

## PERSPECTIVE.

IT has been long disputed whether the eye has any natural power of distinguishing the distances from itself of objects in space. It is generally allowed that such power has to be gathered by experience; and that mere images on the retina are insufficient to give the mind any idea of relative or even absolute remoteness from the eye. It is said that persons blind from their birth, who have suddenly obtained their sight, by an operation or other means, find that all things at first appear equally distant from them, or rather equally near to them. Everything they see seems to them in contact with the eye. Hence it appears that the only kind of magnitude of which we can become *directly* conscious through the eye, is *angular* magnitude. That is to say, if two points are visible at a distance from each other, the eye can naturally only take cognizance of the angular distance between them. This would appear the same, whether one point were near the eye, the other not, or if both were at the same distance, provided their position were changed in a direct line from the eye. Now, if the points kept their place, and the eye changed its position, the angular distance between them would change; and if one were near the eye, the other distant, it would change rapidly. This

apparent change in the relative position of points gives us one most important means of judging by the eye of their forms and positions. We can see an illustration of this when we look at a starry sky. It is impossible to judge of the relative or actual distance of stars from each other, because, move as we will, they appear stationary with regard to each other. Consequently the heaven or firmament looks like a blue vault studded with stars, at no great distance and of almost solid hemispherical form: a *Στερέωμα*, or firmament, as old astronomers called it. The images of things, in fact, like their names, seem to be only signs of them, and the power of reading visual signs has to be acquired by experience. Appearances are constantly at variance with facts. By various distances and position, a circle may be made to appear elliptical in form, or a smaller thing larger than a greater. These facts are part of the science of Optics, or the laws of vision. Perspective, as we understand it, is a simpler and more limited matter; and this requires some illustration, as follows:—

Let the spectator, or his seeing eye—(we ignore all the rest of him except his eye, and further suppose him to see as with one eye, and not with two)—let the seeing eye be supposed to be placed in the centre of a sphere, able to look successively in any direction towards any point in that sphere. Now, if a straight line be presented to him as representing extension, there is a position in which he would only be able to see it as a point. (We are speaking of course not of mathematical, but actually drawn lines and points.) If the line were placed before the eye end on, so as to

be exactly in the line of vision, nothing would be seen but the end of it, which is a point. It becomes visible to the eye as a line denoting extension, as soon as it is moved out of the direct line of the eye. The rays which proceed from it to the eye are then no longer all in one line, but enclose an angle, and give an idea of a definite length between them; the amount of the length depending on the size of the angle. In other words, two lines, or portions of the same line, will have their *apparent* lengths in the same proportion to each other as the angles they subtend at the eye, no matter what their *actual* length may be. A curious result follows: viz. that the length of a line may be without limit, while its *apparent* magnitude may never exceed a finite quantity.

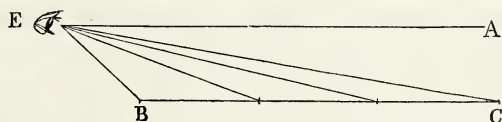


FIG. 1.

In fig. 1 we see that if successive equal portions of the line BC be taken at increasing distances from the eye, the angle at the eye subtended by each of these diminishes as they recede. And if the line be extended to any length, the ray from its extreme point to the eye can never become absolutely parallel with the line EA. But it is possible to imagine the line BC extended to such a length that the ray from its extreme point shall be nearer the parallel position than any other we can assign. So that the parallel direction is the limit of change

in direction of the ray from the line BC to the eye E. Therefore the angle AEB, contained between the parallel EA and the first ray EB drawn to the nearest end of BC (supposing it to be limited in that direction), will be the limit of measure of the *apparent* length of BC, even if BC were extended indefinitely in the same direction.

Hence, it will be seen, that if a straight line exists in space, not passing through the eye, it becomes visible as *length*, as at EC: but that, however long it may be itself, its image is always finite. The quality of straightness is not easy to describe. In the above figure we have seen that when the line BC is extended in direction C, the ray from E to its further extremity gradually approaches direction EA. That is to say, when the extremity of BC is visible, it will appear somewhere between B, the point of the line nearest the eye, and that point into which the whole line EC will resolve itself as a seen image when it coincides with the line of sight EA. The farther C is from B the nearer it will appear to approach to the line EA. The state of things then would be this: A line EA extending from the eye seems like a single point; any other line BC, though parallel to it, appears to stretch from its nearest point B towards contact with it in the line of sight, when it appears as a point. So it would be with other lines parallel to it also<sup>1</sup>. So that a system of straight lines in space, all parallel to each other, would look like so many straight lines

<sup>1</sup> This apparent convergence of lines really parallel may be observed by looking along railroad lines from a platform or bridge.



radiating from a centre, that centre being the one line of the system whose whole appearance is a point by reason of its passing through the line of sight.

This reasoning will apply to the same system of parallel lines extending in the other direction B: so that the same appearance of straight lines radiating from a centre would be presented on two opposite sides. This would seem to be contradictory to the fact of the lines being straight, since straight lines cannot meet in more than one point. As has been said, the eye can only take note of the extension of a line as transverse or angular magnitude, and apparent straightness consists in the line never leaving the plane which joins it and the eye. If a circle be presented to the eye in such a position that the eye is in the same plane outside the circumference, it will only appear as a finite straight line; and so if the eye were within the circle, and in the plane of the curve, the circumference would still appear straight. And if this circle were to be cut by another, with the same centre but in a plane inclined to it, the circumference of that circle would still give to the eye at the centre the same impression of straightness, though it would be seen to meet the other in two points on opposite sides. This seems the best way of realizing the appearance of a series of parallel lines infinitely prolonged both ways: they would be like the meridian lines of a globe to an eye placed at its centre.

As a line in a particular plane viewed by an eye in the same plane appears the same whether straight or curved, it follows that lines different in length and

direction may be substituted for each other, and yet produce the same effect upon the eye of the spectator. For instance, imagine right lines EA, EB to proceed

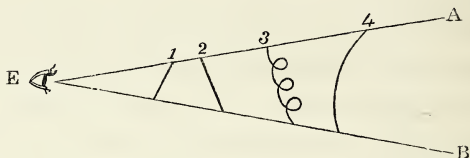


FIG. 2.

from the eye E. It is evident that all the lines 1, 2, 3, 4, straight or curved, would all look straight and the same to the eye, provided they all lay in the plane AEB. In fact, supposing a figure of any form to be visible, we can suppose another figure of quite a different shape so placed as to intercept its image, supply its place, and give quite the same impression to the eye. It is quite possible to have a collection of lines and figures all in the same plane which shall present exactly the same appearance to the spectator's eye as so many solid objects at any distance, provided the several points of both objects and figures are in the straight line which meets the point E, or the spectator's eye. These figures would form a perspective representation, or picture, of the various objects: to determine their form and position in any given case is the function of Perspective.

Let us define a Picture or Perspective Delineation a little more strictly. Imagine that lines or rays proceed from every point of the objects to be represented, and converge on a point; and further, that on their way to it they have to pass through a plane,

upon which they produce certain figures by passing through it. Then those figures are the perspective projections of the several objects, and the plane is their picture. If one could trace a landscape on a window-pane, along its lines, they would form a perspective drawing. Hence it appears that the problem of perspective is simply this: 'Given a point in space, or an eye, to which straight lines from the given objects converge; to determine the forms in which those lines would intersect a plane which cuts them as the window-pane does the rays proceeding from the landscape it covers.'

It is often said that no perspective drawing can give the true appearance of a complicated object, because in looking at its different parts the eye is always changing the direction of its picture-plane; so that one's impression involves an act of combination of many different images in many different planes. But this has nothing to do with the correctness of a perspective drawing, even if it be true: for if the drawing is correct, the eye, when placed at the point of sight, will pass over its different parts and take in each point consecutively, varying its image in looking at the picture, as it does in looking at the object. The window seems to illustrate this. And the images traced on the pane, the perspective projections of the various objects, will appear identical with the objects, while the eye remains at the point of convergence; and the eye can move about the picture looking at different objects in it on the point of projection as a centre.

Projection is the name given in geometrical drawing

to the figure produced on a plane when an object is referred to it according to fixed method. It is called the orthographic projection of a figure on a plane, when lines are supposed to be drawn from every point in it to meet a plane at right angles, all parallel to each other, and their intersection is marked on the plane. Of this kind are all plans, elevations, sections, &c., all architectural and mechanical work, and generally all drawings for reference in every kind of construction. If the lines of projection, instead of being at right angles with the plane, were converging on a point at the other side of it, farthest from the object, the projection would be a perspective representation: and an eye placed in the point of convergence would get the same impression from the projection as from the object. Hence it will be seen, that making a perspective drawing is simply a geometrical proceeding; that is, it is so, if you know all the conditions as to size, distance, and position of the objects, the plane of projection, and the point of sight.

We define perspective, then, as the drawing on a given surface such forms as shall convey to the spectator the impression that he looks not at but through the surface at certain objects<sup>1</sup>, of which your drawing is the visual appearance or signs, coinciding with the impression he would get from the objects themselves under given conditions. And since all objects are seen by means of light reflected in right lines from their surfaces, it is clear that if one can

<sup>1</sup> Hence the name *Per-spective*, 'looking through.'



so manage that the rays of light from the traced forms shall have the same arrangement among each other as if they came from actual objects, the tracings will stand to the spectator for the objects, and be subject to the same laws of vision; so that it is not necessary for him to know, when he sees a straight line, whether its image on the retina is straight or curved, or whether he sees it as length or angular space. All that perspective has to do with is the question whether the images impressed on the retina by the picture correspond to the images impressed by the objects: it can only tell the spectator how he sees what he sees—and cannot inform him about the nature of what he sees.

This enables us to face Dr. Brook Taylor's observation in his *Perspective*. He says that a picture painted to the ideal degree of perfection ought to affect the eye of the beholder even to deception; so that he shall not be able to say whether he is looking at a picture or through a window. 'To produce this effect it is clear that the light ought to come from the picture to the spectator's eye in the very same manner as from the objects themselves. That is to say, every ray of light ought to come to the spectator's eye, from every point in the picture, with the same strength of light and shadow, the same colour, and in the same direction, as it would do from the corresponding point of the same object, if it were placed where it is imagined to be.'

It would of course be impossible to produce a picture like this, as far as light and colour are concerned, (the story of the grapes and curtain notwithstanding);

but under certain conditions the *line-forms* of objects may be reproduced as faithfully as the description requires.

These conditions must now be stated with some precision;—and for the purpose some special terms must be made use of, which are here explained:—

*Picture Plane.* The plane on which the drawing or 'projection' is to be made is called the Picture-plane, the Plane of Delineation, or shortly, the Picture.

*Point of Sight.* That point to which the rays from the objects represented converge, or the position of the spectator's eye, is called the point of sight, and the station or standing-point.

*Distance of a Picture.* The length of a perpendicular from the point of sight on the picture-plane.

*Centre of Vision.* That point in the picture-plane in which the perpendicular from the stand-point meets it. As the picture-plane is represented by the canvas or paper, it is most convenient to refer to it the relative positions of the eye and the objects to be drawn. Given C, the centre of vision, and a line CE representing the distance of the picture, you have the position of the point of sight precisely indicated. See fig. 3.

In this figure E is the position of the eye or point of projection, ABCD a plane figure to be represented in perspective, PP'' a plane through which rays or

right lines from  $A, B, C$  and  $D$  converge on  $E$ . Then, if the points  $a, b, c, d$ , in which each of these rays cuts the picture-plane, be joined, as in the diagram, the figure produced would be the perspective of  $ABCD$ , and indeed would not be distinguished from it in its proper position. For  $AE, BE, CE, DE$  being all right lines of sight, all points in them are the same to the spectator's eye: so that in his eye the points

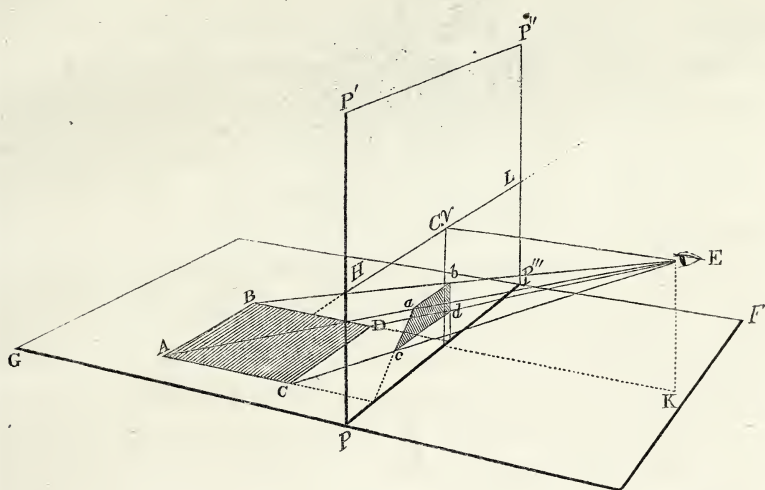


FIG. 3.

$a, b, c, d$  are the same with the points  $A, B, C, D$ ; and so with all the other points in the plane  $ABCD$ .

It is only when the spectator's eye is situated exactly at  $E$  that this takes place; and therefore the complete similarity between an object and its perspective-picture depends on the observance of this condition. At the same time, it is clear that the draughtsman, as such, has nothing to do with the spectator's finding the right place for his eye, but is

only concerned that there should be one for him, viz. that the visual rays or lines AE, BE, &c., should really converge to a single point E. This point the spectator who wishes to see the true appearance of a perspective representation must always find for himself.

The diagram fig. 3 also illustrates the relative positions of the objects, and lines, and points above-defined.

Thus PP" is the picture-plane; C.V, centre of vision; E, point of sight. Line from E to C.V is the distance of the picture. HL is the horizontal line, and GF represents a portion of the ground-plane, conceived as a plane at right angles to the picture-plane, the position of which as determined by line EK is generally one of the data.

In order to learn the variations of the visual appearance of objects, the usual way is to assume a perfect knowledge of the necessary points in the case of some simple object: first to suppose them placed at a given distance from E, and in a given position with respect to E and the picture-plane; and then to determine what form the perspective would take. By doing this with various objects under various conditions, as here with the plane figure ABCD, the learner becomes familiar with the results in particular cases, and can anticipate the probable appearance of actual objects and render them correctly in his picture, *from what he sees*, without finding it necessary to know the actual shapes, sizes and distances, or using any of the geometrical constructions necessary in severe investigation like the above.

Many people imagine, that anybody with an eye



or eyes must surely be able to see the things before them, and discover the apparent relative positions of lines and points, without the trouble of learning perspective. But most persons need only attempt to draw, say one or two straight-lined solid objects, to find that they are quite helpless, not only from want of manual skill, but from sheer inability to see what is before them. They cannot say at all, or they say directly wrong, whether a line appears to go up or down, or is longer or shorter than another. Others, again, who begin to study perspective seem to do so without much hope that it will ever be of practical service to them in drawing from Nature, because they cannot then ascertain the actual forms and distances, so as to put objects into perspective by rule, or rather so as to be able to prove the correctness of their work. But they will find, after a time, that there are a few general principles which govern all perspective change, and that these may be rendered into broad rules which will guide them in drawing by eye. Space forbids us to do more now than shew what these rules are for placing given figures in perspective, and give the sketcher such an account of them as he can best bear in mind.

Diminution of size by distance from the eye is the most familiar to us of all effects of perspective. The distant object, as has been shewn, is smaller, i.e. subtends a smaller angle at the eye: and this may be demonstrated on a picture-plane as follows:—

Let E be the eye; PP', edge of picture; AB, CD, two parallel lines of the same length at different distances from PP'.

It is evident that right lines AE, BE must fall within CE, DE; consequently line *ab* on the picture-plane, which is the perspective of AB, is less than *cd* on the same plane, which is the perspective of CD.

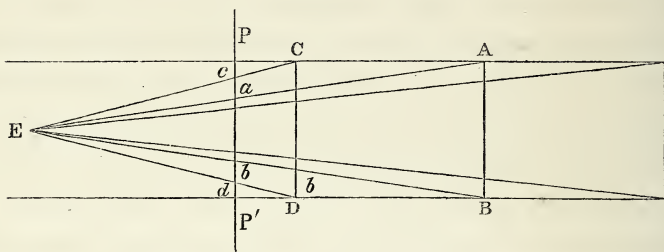


FIG. 4.

In the same way if AB be moved to a greater distance it will subtend a still smaller angle, and the subtending line on the picture-plane will be still shorter.

As these lines enclose a smaller angle they approach each other; so that if AB were moved away to an indefinite distance between the parallels CA and DB, its perspective-representation would become indefinitely small; in fact, the EA, EB would coincide with each other and *ab* become a point; or more correctly, 'the limit of the diminution of the perspective of AB as its distance from the picture-plane increases, is zero.' Accordingly, in our former diagram it will be seen (fig. 3) that the lines AE, BE, drawn to the eye from the more distant corners of the square on the ground, produce on PP' a perspective-line *ab*, shorter than *cd*, perspective-line of the nearer side CD. Then as to sides of the square AC, BD. Their intersections with

the picture-plane are represented on it by straight lines, since AEC, BED are plane triangles intersecting a plane. Moreover, they are right lines connecting the extremities of unequal parallel lines  $cd$  and  $ab$ . They would therefore meet if produced in the direction of the shorter  $ab$ : and the point in which they meet is the same point as the one mentioned above, in fig. 4, as marking the extinction of magnitude of the perspective-picture of the line AB, on indefinite increase of distance from the PP'. This point, then, is called the vanishing point of  $ac$ ,  $bd$ . And as vanishing points are very important matters in perspective, we must discover their relation to lines AB and CD in their original position in fig. 4.

- In that figure, as we said, lines or visual rays from the line AB come closer together on PP' as AB recedes. Now consider the case of rays coming to E from lines CA and DB. Then, as in the case of AC and BD in the square in fig. 3, the perspective-lines they will produce on the picture-plane will tend to meet each other in a point; and their meeting point will be that point on PP' at which a line drawn from E parallel to CA and DB would cut it; for to this parallel the lines EC, ED, EA, EB, &c. &c., continually tend as you assume more remote points along the parallels AC, DB. Therefore the point on the picture-plane through which this parallel passes is the vanishing point, to which the perspective-representations of all these lines converge; and similarly with all parallels to these lines CA, DB. These lines are drawn in the figure at right angles with the picture-plane; but the same is true of lines at any other angle with it. So that to find

the vanishing point of any set of parallel lines we have only to imagine a line passing through the eye, or point of sight, in the same direction, and meeting the picture-plane: the point in which it meets the picture-plane will be their vanishing point. Thus in fig. 3 the object is a square, two of whose sides are at right angles with  $PP'$ , and two parallel to it. The vanishing point of the former will be found by supposing a line to proceed from  $E$  in the same direction as  $AB$  and  $CD$ , i. e. at right angles to the picture-plane. But the point at which this line  $EC$  meets the picture-plane is the centre of vision; consequently the lines  $ca$  and  $db$  would, if produced, meet in that point. If we take the two sides  $AB$ ,  $CD$ , which are parallel to the picture-plane, a line through  $E$  in their direction would never meet it at all; so that they have no vanishing point in the picture. Their representative lines on the picture-plane do not tend to meet in any point, and they are parallel to each other, as in the figure. Hence two rules, which will be referred to again in summing up:—1. That the perspectives of lines which are parallel to the picture-plane are parallel to each other, and do not converge. 2. That those of lines at right angles to the picture-plane must meet in the centre of vision.

Again, let us take the case of a line on the ground in a different position from the above, not at right angles to the picture-plane, but inclined to the right at  $45^\circ$ , or half a right angle. Its position can be seen in fig. 3; as that of the diagonal  $CB$  of the square  $ABCD$ ; and its perspective can be at once obtained by joining the corners  $c, b$  of the perspective-square



*abcd* on the picture-plane. But, supposing that we wish to determine the vanishing point, or the point to which that diagonal and all its parallels appear to converge. Then, as before, imagine a line *EK* (fig. 5) to proceed from *E* to the picture-plane parallel to the original diagonal *CB* at  $45^\circ$  with it. The point *K*, where this line meets the picture-plane produced, is the vanishing point we want. Accordingly we find on joining *c, b* that that line, if produced, passes through *K*.

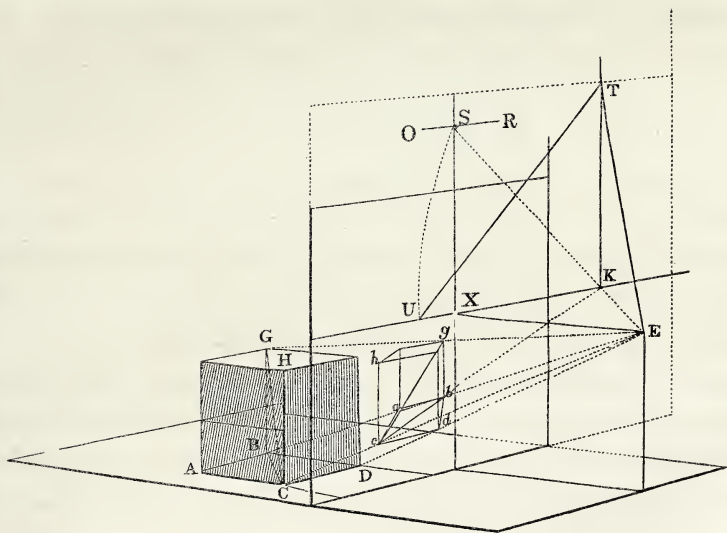


FIG. 5.

In the same way, the vanishing point of any line which, in its original position, is inclined both to the picture and the ground, is still that point on the picture-plane which is marked by the intersection therewith of the line parallel to it which passes through *E*.

Hence the operation of determining the vanishing

points of lines whose exact position is known is a simple matter, supposing that lines can be drawn in any given direction from E, the point of sight. But this is just what cannot be done, as the point of sight lies out of our drawing. Imagine this page to be the plane in fig. 6, and let point C be the centre of vision marked there. Then point of sight E in figs. 3 and 5 would be a point in front of the page, exactly opposite to the centre of vision (or in a line from the centre of vision at right angles to the page), and distance of E from the centre of vision would be the distance of our picture.

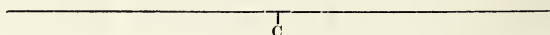


FIG. 6.

Now it clearly would be inconvenient, if always possible, to fix something projecting from the centre of vision, so as to get our point of sight from which to draw other lines meeting the page again. We have therefore to discover some means of finding out where the lines from the eye would meet the page, so as not to necessitate the use of a construction out of the plane of the picture.

It must be premised that, though, strictly speaking, the picture-plane or our page may have any position whatever with respect to the horizon, so long as its relation to the point of sight and the objects to be drawn is strictly defined, it is always supposed to be in a vertical position, at right angles with the horizon. And generally, for the sake of defining the position of the lines to be represented, this vertical

PP' is supposed to be intersected by a horizontal plane; and lines are referred to both of these, when their position and direction are described. Lines can then be classified according to their position, thus:

1. Lines parallel to both picture-plane and horizontal-plane.
2. Lines parallel to the former and inclined to the latter
3. Lines parallel to the latter and inclined to the former.
4. Lines inclined to both picture-plane and horizontal-plane.

A cube and its diagonals illustrate this perfectly. As to the first set of lines, there is no difficulty about them, since they are parallel to both planes, the horizontal and the picture-plane, i.e. to the intersection of the ground with the picture. They will, therefore, be always horizontal lines in the picture. The second also are easy to deal with, as it is evident that since each of them is parallel to the picture-plane it will be parallel to its projection on that plane. The projection-line, therefore, will make the same angle with the base-line of the picture-plane as the original makes with the ground. The projections of lines parallel to the picture-plane are themselves parallel, and have no vanishing points, as above shewn, in finding those points by the visual rays from E. As to the third class, lines parallel to the ground, but inclined towards the picture—here it is clear that a line from E parallel to the given original line would meet the picture-plane, make an angle with it, and consequently its projection would have a vanishing

point. The diagonal CB of the square in fig. 5, and that of the top of the block, are in this position, parallel with the ground and inclined at  $45^\circ$  to the picture-plane.

If a line be supposed to proceed from E in exactly the same direction, we find it meets the picture in a point somewhere to the right of the centre. That will be the vanishing point of the line in the picture which represents the original line CB. How, then, are we to determine the place of this point, since we cannot draw lines in the plane of the picture from E, which is in front of our paper?

It may be arrived at thus, fig 5: Since line EK is parallel to CB, and EX to BD, the plane of the triangle EKX is parallel to the square ABCD; therefore the intersections of both planes with the picture, KX and CD, are parallels. Hence we see that the vanishing point lies in a line which passes through the centre of vision and in a horizontal direction; in fact, the horizontal line: and if we can determine the length of KX, that is, the distance of the vanishing point from the centre of vision, its place is found. Now in the triangle EKX, side EX is given, that being the distance of the picture; and the angles at X and E are given, the former being a right angle, the latter the complement of the inclination of line EK or CB to the picture, (in this case  $45^\circ$ ); so that it is easy to construct the triangle and find the length of KX. The usual way is to draw from X a line at right angles to the horizontal line (either above or below) and set on this the distance of the picture: then to make an angle at S = angle KEX. The line thus drawn will meet



the horizontal line in K. The angle KEX being the complement of the angle which EK makes with PP, it is usual to draw a short horizontal line through S, as OR, and to make angle RSK = the angle which EK makes with PP—that angle being the same as BCD, the angle given as the inclination of line CD with PP. Hence for all purposes connected with the finding of vanishing points on the horizontal line the point S will do as well as the actual point of sight E. Also, the perspectives of all lines which lie on the ground or are parallel to it, no matter how far above or below, have their vanishing points in the horizontal line; which is on that account called the vanishing line of horizontal planes: the remoteness of these vanishing points from the centre of vision depending on the angle which the actual line is supposed to make with the picture-plane. If this angle is very small, i.e. if the line differs very slightly in direction from the base-line, it will be seen that when a line is drawn from S, making this very small angle with SR, its intersection with the horizontal line will be at a great distance from CN: so that *the perspective lines which tend to that as a vanishing point will be almost horizontal*. This is to be kept in mind in drawing from Nature.

This method is followed with respect to the vanishing points of lines in any position: any difference is of detail, and depends on the terms in which the relative position of the given line to the picture-plane and the horizontal plane is defined. First, the line is to be considered as lying in a plane whose position with respect to the picture-plane is given. The vanishing line of

that plane must be found, and a construction made from the centre of that, like the one above the horizontal line, by which the distance of the vanishing point from the centre of vision in either direction may be found. For example, let the line to be represented be one which is inclined both to the picture and ground, such as the line which joins the opposite corners of the cube CGD. This line may be looked upon as in the plane of BGCH, which is a vertical plane, making with the face of the cube CDFH, and consequently, with the picture, the angle BCD. Its vanishing point then will be in a line on the picture made by the intersection of a plane which passes through the point of sight in a direction parallel to the original plane BCHG, i.e. at right angles to the ground and making an angle = BCD with PP'. The intersection with the picture will be a vertical line. And since the vanishing line of a plane contains the vanishing points of all the lines in it, the vanishing line of the plane BCHG must contain the vanishing point of BC. That is to say, it will be an upright line passing through the vanishing point K, the centre (the point nearest the eye) of the vanishing line. In this, then, the vanishing point of the line CG will be found, if we can determine how far it lies from this centre K. Look at the diagram once more: the line KT is the vanishing line spoken of. The line from E, parallel to CG, and which generates the vanishing point of its representation, is ET. The problem is therefore to determine the length of KT, which may be done by constructing a triangle in the picture-plane equal in all respects to the triangle EKT. Thus, from K draw a line at right angles to KT. This will of course

in this case coincide with the horizontal line. On that set off a length from K = EK, which we have as SK on the picture-plane in our former construction. Let U represent the point to which this reaches: from U draw a line making with UK an angle KUT = angle KET: which is the angle at which the original line GC is inclined to the ground, or the line BC. This line will then meet the vanishing line in T, and this will be the vanishing point of the line on PP which represents line CG, and of all lines parallel to it. The point U here plays the part of E, as did S in the former construction; being at the same distance as E from K. This distance, EK or UK, is called *the distance* of the vanishing line KT; and is always given when EX and KX are given.

These are some of the artifices and constructions by which the vanishing points of lines are determined; without making use of E in its proper place, but only of its distance EX: which is always a given quantity. These vanishing points of course only determine the direction of the perspective lines, and not their length. And as this varies with every change of position in the same line, it becomes necessary to find a means of representing the apparent length of the same line under different conditions; or, in other words, of finding what portion of the picture-plane is included between the rays from the eye to its extremities in its different positions. This is usually done by the use of what are called measuring points. They are neither more nor less than vanishing points of lines so arranged as to cut off equal portions from some line on the picture-plane and the





point of sight. Therefore, in order to set any given distance on the perspective of  $ab$ , we have simply to measure a line of the actual geometric length on the picture-line, and draw from its extremities lines to M: which will intercept equal lengths from the picture-

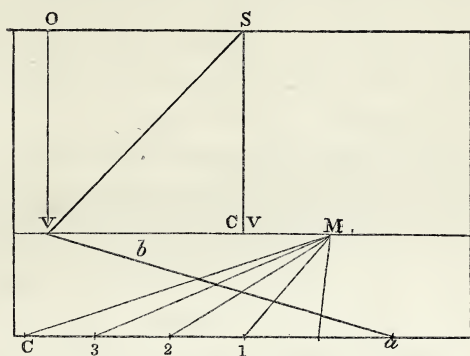


FIG. 8.

plane and from  $ab$ . The above figure shews the appearance which the above construction would present when the page is the picture-plane seen from the front in its right position.

The  $ab$  in fig. 8 is the representation on PP of the original line  $ab$  in fig. 7. Its vanishing point is obtained as above described, i. e. from S, whose distance from CV = distance of the picture-plane from E, a line SV is drawn; making angle OSV = angle made by the original line  $ab$  with PP in fig. 7 (= to angle  $bac$  in that figure). The point M is now set on the horizontal line at a distance from V = SV: when it becomes the vanishing point of lines which make equal angles with the picture-plane and  $ab$ : and is the measuring point of the vanishing point V. Therefore, if on the indefinite line  $ab$  it be required to

place any given length, that length is first measured on the picture-line from point  $a$  towards the left, and then a line is drawn from the point so found, towards  $M$  the measuring point. In the figure successive measurements  $a$ , 1, 2, 3, &c., are made along the picture-line or base-line from  $a$  to the left, and a line is drawn from each point to  $M$ . These lines mark off on  $ab$  portions which are the perspective representations of these equal divisions.

It will be now seen that the perspective of a line can be found when its position and length (as also, of course, the picture-plane and point of sight  $E$ ) are given. On these data, then, all rectilinear figures can be represented. Curves can only be indirectly represented. They are generally conceived as connected with rectilinear figures whose representation can be found, and from points in them thus determined the pupil gets a correct idea of the projection of the curve on the picture-plane, and can draw it freehand. In a great many cases the kind of curve which will be produced may be known beforehand geometrically. A circle in all positions but two becomes an ellipse when in perspective. Rays from the circumference converging on  $E$  form a cone, right or oblique: and when this cone is cut by  $PP$ , the form of the section (which by definition is the perspective of the circle) will be an ellipse, except (1) when the cutting plane is parallel to the plane of the circle, (2) when the point of sight is in the plane of the circle, in which case, as we have seen, its perspective is a right line. But if a few of the principal points in its projection are

found, the curve may be completed by any geometrical mode of construction proper to it. The most common way of placing a circle in perspective is to suppose it inscribed in a square, whose diameters and diagonals are drawn as in fig. 9. When this square is put

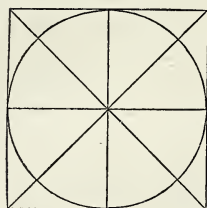


FIG. 9.

in perspective, with its diagonals, and those portions of the diagonals which lie outside the circumference are geometrically determined, a sufficient number of points will have been found to make it possible to draw through them the ellipse which represents the circle: as there are the middle points

of the four sides where the circle and square touch each other, and the four points where the circumference crosses the diagonals.

As to the perspective of the sphere, it has been questioned whether it should be a circle or an ellipse. But all doubt on the matter may be traced to a confusion between the visual appearance of the sphere and the actual form of the curve on the picture-plane which represents it, and not remembering that this curve must be seen from the true point of sight. There is no doubt that to the eye a sphere always presents the appearance of a circle,—that circle which marks the contact of the cone of rays from the eye with the surface of the sphere. Nor can it be disputed, that when this cone is cut by a picture-plane in any other position than at right angles with its axis, the form of the section will be an ellipse. This will be evident from fig. 10.

The rays from E to the sphere touch its surface

in points  $ab$  of circle  $ab$ . When the picture-plane intercepts these rays, an ellipse will be produced on its surface: but this ellipse, when seen from  $E$ , will produce the same impression on the eye as the

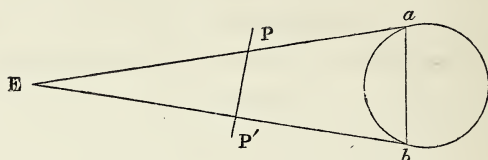


FIG. 10.

circle  $ab$ . If the form of the section were represented as a circle, that circle seen from point of sight  $E$  would not appear a circle but an ellipse.

Thus much for the nature of perspective-projection, and the methods of determining by rule the variations of figures represented under different conditions. Let us now try to find how all this will help us, in drawing from the visual appearance of the actual object; or, as we say, in sketching from Nature. Observe, in the geometrical construction of the perspective of an object, the given quantities are, (1) its true form and dimensions, and, (2) the exact positions of the object and point of sight  $E$ , relatively to  $PP$ ; the thing to be found is the perspective-projection on  $PP$ . The object need not exist at all in any position;—it is sufficient to assume these data respecting it, in order to produce a representation of the same visual appearance seen from  $E$  on  $PP$ , which the object would present if it did exist. In drawing from an actual object these conditions are changed. The end, the correct perspective picture on a plane, is the same:



but instead of definite knowledge about the measurements, &c. of the object, we have the thing itself before our eyes (or rather, as we first stipulated, our eye). Our drawing is to coincide with its visual appearance in form. Now, the knowledge hitherto gained will enable us to analyse that appearance better than we should do without it, and to anticipate the probable apparent relation of parts to each other. This is always a great difficulty to a person uneducated in perspective; as he is always led to put the facts he *knows* about the object at variance with what he *sees* and has to represent of its actual visual appearance.

The laws of perspective modify the appearance of all objects whatever when they are drawn on a plane, but their influence is most easily recognized in objects composed of straight or geometrical forms, and it will be found that drawing such things is very valuable practice to teach the student to apply his perspective knowledge in sketching from Nature. Wooden cubes, rectangular blocks, prisms, pyramids, cones, cylinders, spheres, &c., are to be had for this purpose from any artists'-colourman; and the more perfect the student can make himself in drawing them the better.

Let us imagine him seated about six feet from a square table, upon which are several rectangular solids. We shall suppose that in looking towards the centre of a group of them, his line of vision will be at right angles to the edge of the table. Let him now hold up his drawing-board vertically between him and the table, parallel with the table's edge, and covering completely

the extent of space which he intends to represent. It is now in its true place as a picture-plane; and the drawing, when made, ought exactly to coincide with the actual lines of the group, as if it could be traced on a transparent drawing-board. Now it is clear that to secure this, it must be made of a particular size for any given distance of the drawing-board from the eye. In other words, if the board be held nearer the spectator, a smaller drawing will be sufficient to cover the whole, and if at a greater distance, a larger. It will be seen also that this difference of size is the only effect produced by changing the distance of the picture, so long as that between the eye and the models remains the same: the relation of the lines to each other remains unchanged though the distance of the board is changed. For example, in fig. 11, if the places of E



FIG. 11.

and O are fixed, the system of rays from O to E will remain constant: and if this is cut by planes parallel to each other, but at different distances from E, as 1 and 2, it can be easily shewn that the forms of both sections would be similar, but that their linear size would vary directly as their distance from E. We have only then to consider what will be the most convenient size for our drawing, remembering that in fixing its scale we are really fixing the position of the picture-plane between the eye and the object. Pupils often ask whether they are to draw an object the same size as they

see it, and cannot understand that any size may be the size they see it according to the distance they look at it from. Let the student therefore remember, that though he may hold his board in a horizontal or any other position for the convenience of sketching, as soon as he has determined the size of any part of his drawing, and its space on his paper, he has fixed the true place of his picture-plane. And if he finds it necessary to try to discover the apparent direction of a line in his object compared with any fixed line on his paper or the edge of his board, he must hold the latter in its true position between himself and the model.

One more point must be noticed before we begin our sketch: that is to say, the lateral direction of the picture-plane. The student has been told to consider PP parallel to the edge of the table, that being at right angles to the line which passes from the eye to about the centre of the group. But it is clear that it may have any other position, and still fulfil strictly all the conditions necessary for obtaining a perspective projection upon it. Thus, in fig. 12, if the

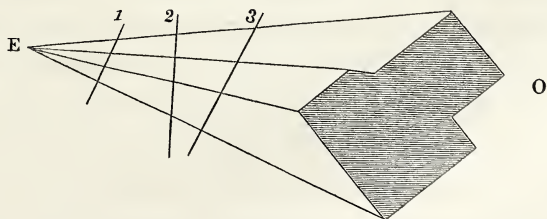


FIG. 12.

shaded figure represents the plan of our object, and E the point of sight to which the rays from O converge,

we can be sure that the cone of rays may be cut by a plane in any position whatever, as at 1, 2, 3; and in each case, by definition the section produced would be the perspective of O, though they would be all different. They differ from each other in absolute form; but while they are in the positions 1, 2, 3, in which the sections of the cone of rays are produced, they will of course all present exactly the same impression of form, to an eye at E, as the original O. Any such position then may be chosen for the picture-plane, provided the drawing, when made, shews clearly in what position it is supposed to be with regard to the spectator, and from what point it ought to be looked at. Most spectators naturally take their point of view somewhere nearly opposite the centre of the subject drawn. We must, therefore, choose such a position for our picture-plane as will be the most likely for the spectator to place it in with relation to himself—in short, such a position as he will see it in. This will depend almost entirely on the extent of the subject to be represented. When the sketcher has made up his mind how far it is to stretch right and left, let him suppose his picture-plane to be placed at right angles to a line drawn from his eye to *about* the middle of it. We say *about* the middle, as it sometimes happens that by putting this central line a little to one side or the other of the exact centre, we may make the perspective forms of some of the objects seem simpler in their construction than they would otherwise be.

To begin with our models. Hold up the board vertically, parallel to the edge of the table and at such



a distance from the ground as to make its outline comfortably include all the group of models. Mark the point in your board exactly opposite the eye at right angles. That will be your centre of vision. One of the models is (say) a square block, and it has its nearest face just parallel to the edge of the table, while, from its being to left of the centre, and below the level of the eye, we can see its right side and top foreshortened. Now we know that in that position its nearest face is parallel to our picture-plane, and consequently the four lines which bound it can be drawn, two horizontal and two vertical, with as nearly as possible the same ratio to each other as the originals have. From the four corners of this face, lines proceed straight from the spectator in a direction at right angles to the picture: three of which are visible. These, as was found before, will not be represented as parallel to each other, but will converge to a vanishing point, that vanishing point being in their case a centre of vision. Draw lines then of indefinite length, tending towards the point you have marked as a centre, and then try to decide on the apparent breadth of the surfaces which are to represent the top and right side of the block. Any one with a good eye will do this rightly in a few trials—keeping in mind that he must not look upon the surface of the top and side as receding space, but as *all in the same plane as the near face*.

Sometimes he may help himself by holding out his pencil in an upright position at arm's length, marking on it with his thumb-nail the apparent width of the top, and comparing this with the height of the face he has

drawn, so as to get the proportion between them. Or he may look at the model and imagine a perpendicular dropped from a farther corner on the near edge, and observe in what proportion the latter is divided by it, and reverse this operation in his drawing. As a rule, the tendency is at first to make receding surfaces much

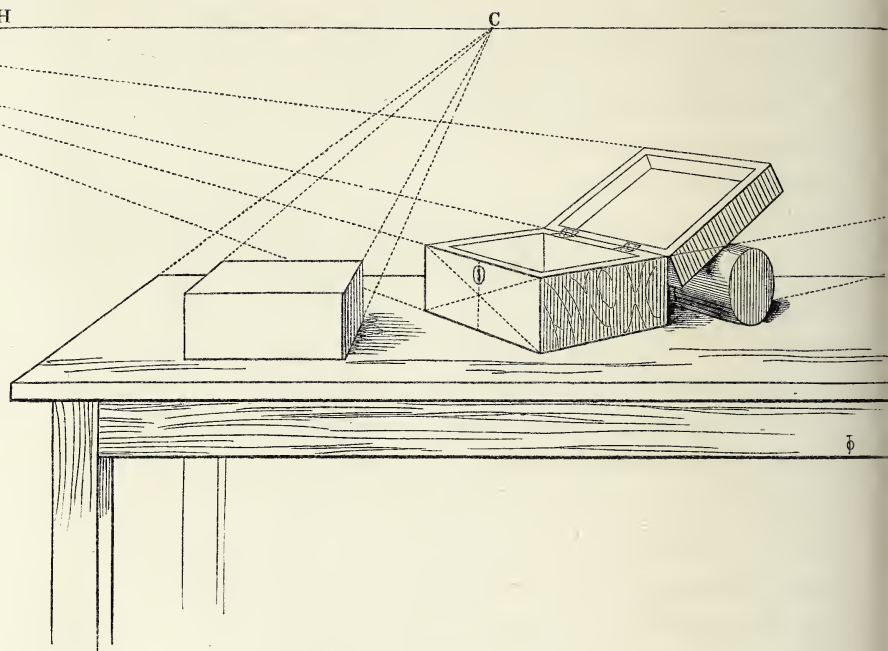


FIG. 13.

larger than they should be. This should be kept in mind as a general axiom, that where lines converge rapidly, and their vanishing point is near their origin, a smaller width will represent as much of the receding surface as a greater would do were the vanishing point farther off, and the convergence, consequently, less apparent.

We learn, then, from the above, and what has gone before at p. 444, that when a sketcher observes lines in a scene before him, whose direction with respect to his picture-plane or picture is the same as that of those in the block above (fig. 13), they must be treated in the same way. Those parallel to the picture, stretching right and left or up and down, will be in the picture horizontal and vertical respectively; while those which stretch into the picture in a direction perpendicular to the others must vanish in the centre of vision.

Again: since the upper surface of the block, and that of the table, are both below the level of the eye, they are both visible. On the paper they will be represented by spaces bounded by horizontal lines, the lowest in each case representing the near edge. If the block were to be raised to a level with the eye, none of its upper surface would be seen; that would be a straight line: were it raised above the eye it would also be invisible from being hidden by the block itself; or if it were possible to see under the surface, the upper line would represent the nearest edge and the lower the more distant. This would be accounted for in theory by the position of the vanishing line of horizontal planes. It was pointed out that planes vanish in lines as lines vanish in points: and this is neither more nor less than saying that all lines, the originals of which lie in one plane, will have their vanishing points in one straight line, and that this line will be where another plane, parallel to the first but passing through the point of sight E, would meet PP. If, therefore, we imagine a horizontal plane from the eye to the picture, it will clearly intersect the picture in the horizontal line HL

which passes through the centre of vision. Therefore every surface in the drawing which represents a portion of a horizontal plane, as the table, the top of the block, &c., will appear to tend to this HL. That is to say, of that portion of PP which stands for horizontal surface, the *near* edge will be the under one when it is below HL; the upper when above HL; and when the horizontal surfaces are on a level with HL, both the nearer and further boundary lines will coincide with HL.

Let the sketcher then remember that all lines in the scene before him which are in a horizontal position, vanish somewhere in the horizontal line: as in buildings, the roof-line, eaves, window-sills, &c. Of course, in a drawing, the position of a vanishing point can only be inferred when two or more lines, representing parallels, converge towards it; and the most that the sketcher can do is to avoid glaring contradiction of the above law: such as, for instance, drawing two lines, which from the construction of an object are parallel, in such a direction that they would evidently meet each other before other parallels of the same set, and palpably below or above their proper vanishing line.

But returning to our models, let us assume that to the right of the block now drawn there stands a rectangular box, with the lid open and leaning back. Taking the box-part first, we find its faces no longer parallel, or at right angles to the picture-plane. The two faces towards the front are seen to be inclined to the edge of the table, and therefore to PP; and one of them, the left one, evidently makes a greater angle with it than the other. We shall find in this case, (1) that



the upright edges are still vertical lines in the picture ; (2) that the horizontal lines bounding the two upright planes converge right and left respectively to the vanishing points on the horizontal line ; (3) that those on the left converge more rapidly than those on the right, owing to the position of their respective vanishing points. If, as described at p. 445, lines be supposed to proceed from the eye right and left, in the same directions as the edges of the box, i.e. making a greater angle with the picture on the left and a smaller on the right, the line to the left will clearly meet the picture in a point nearer the centre than the other ; and therefore the convergence to this vanishing point of the lines of the box will be more apparent on the left than on the right. At the same time, the apparent width of the face on the left will be less in proportion to its true size than the other.

In the middle of this left side is seen the keyhole of the lock ; the position of which can be determined accurately enough by the eye, the pupil keeping in mind that the farther half appears a little less than the near one. The exact point of bisection of the sides may be found by drawing the two diagonals, which cross each other in the centre of these rectangular faces, and an upright line through that centre will give the middle line.

The inclined lid gives us an instance of lines inclined to both the horizontal line and the picture-plane ; and in drawing them the chief thing the pupil will have to look to will be their convergence. In this he will be assisted by knowing whereabouts the vanishing points are. First, let us point out that the upper

edge of the lid is still parallel to that on which it hinges, and therefore tends to the same vanishing point in the horizontal line on the left of the centre. Again, the place of the vanishing point of the inclined edges can be realized as before by conceiving a line to pass through the eye parallel to them to meet PP.

This it would do immediately over the vanishing point, on the horizontal line of the end lines of the box, the height above being fixed by the size of the angle which the sloping edges make with the ground.

These then must be drawn so as to incline together slightly from below upwards; but the convergence must be less than that of the horizontal edges of the box which vanish to the right, as the vanishing point of the latter is not so distant.

In the same way the short inclined edges of the lid, which mark its thickness, must tend to a vanishing point which is immediately under the last, below HL: and they will consequently converge from above downwards.

Some such knowledge of perspective as this will help the student in drawing from actual things which involve straight lines, either in their construction or their arrangement: and there are practically but few things which cannot be so referred to straight lines, whose perspective position will help him to a true rendering of all the forms in his picture. In 'Modern Painters,' vol. iv., the author points out the unmistakable influence of visual perspective laws even on the representations of such apparently intractable things as mountain peaks and crests, cloud-forms, &c. The influence of such principles as have been here pointed

out, of the convergence of lines, &c. on the drawing of their forms, is often much more clearly traceable than one might imagine. However irregular or amorphous they may be, the various points in the representation of an object must arrange themselves strictly according to the principles laid down: though to determine this arrangement exactly would be infinitely tedious and complicated. Still, in many instances, the knowledge of what the effect is, in determinable cases, is of use, where the things to be drawn are not strictly determinable. For example, the banks of a river may be anything but straight or parallel to each other, but may yet be near enough to straightness and parallelism, to exhibit very distinctly that convergence to a vanishing point which would be seen in them if they were so<sup>1</sup>.

In the drawing of *Cephalus* and *Procris* there is not a straight line in the picture: yet the law that the perspectives of lines which recede from the spectator at right angles with the picture have their point of convergence in the centre of vision, has its effect, apparent by the narrowing of the path as it recedes from the front into the wood, by the diminution of length and thickness in the tree-trunks, and of

<sup>1</sup> The peculiar melancholy with which most people's minds are lightly touched by the side of a quiet river, especially in the evening or morning, is connected with the fact of the banks leading the eye away into the far distance, and generally to the horizon, with a sense of infinity. And these lines also give one, consciously or unconsciously, a sense of the wandering and unreturning flow of the river, and guide the mind to various comparisons, which affect it freshly enough when they suggest themselves naturally; but would have a very platitudinarian appearance on paper.—R. ST. J. T.

the spaces between them, and (in the mezzotint engraving) by the top line of the clump of trees cresting the high ground on the right.

In the accompanying sketch of the old mill at Iffley will be found examples of straight lines in most of



IFFLEY MILL.

the positions in which they will be likely to occur, and an illustration of some of our rules. Observe, first, that none of the faces of the building are at right angles to the picture, and that those which face the right are inclined to it at a greater angle with it than the other, or recede more directly from the front.



All the horizontal lines, therefore, which run in this direction, the ridge-lines, eaves, sills of windows and doors, &c., converge to a vanishing point which is nearer the centre of the picture than that of the corresponding lines running to the left. The horizontal line drawn across the picture shews the level of the eye: and since this contains the vanishing points first mentioned, all the lines which are above this level incline downward to meet it, and all below the reverse. This would be sufficient to point out the level of the eye if the horizontal line were not drawn.

Next, take note of the direction of the lines of the gables. Their highest points, 1, 2, 3, &c., are of course farther from the spectator than the lowest points visible, 4, 5, &c. Consequently the lines 5-1, 4-2, &c. incline upwards from the picture towards the left. Their vanishing point will then be above the horizontal line, and in the perpendicular through that vanishing point towards which the horizontal line on the left tends. It will in this case be a long way off, and the convergence of the lines will be very slight; so that it might be considered of very little use in drawing the lines: but it is good for the student to know that it is there, as he will not then be likely to place the lines so that two will evidently meet each other before the rest, or, as is very commonly done, on the other side. The lines descending towards the left from the points of the gables will have their vanishing point below the horizontal line in the same perpendicular as the others, since their lowest points are at a greater distance from the picture than their highest; and because they are

inclined at the same angle with the ground as the lines 1-5, 2-4, &c.

The sides of the punt happen to be parallel to the picture, and are in consequence represented by horizontal lines; while the ends, which are necessarily at right angles with the sides, and therefore with the picture, converge towards the centre of vision, which is on the side of the doorway, and of course in the horizontal line.

## APPENDIX.

### GIOTTO ON POVERTY.

Molti son que', che lodan povertate,  
E tadicon<sup>1</sup>, chè fa statto perfetto;  
S 'egli é provato é heletto  
Quello osservando, nulla cosa avendo.

\* \* \* \* \*

Di quella poverta, ch' è contro a voglia  
Non é da dubitar, chè tuttavia  
Chè di pecchare é via.  
Facendo spesso a' giudici far fallo  
E d'onor donna è damigella spoglia,  
E fa far furto, forza è villania,

E spesso usar bugia,  
E ciascun priva d'onorato stallo.

\* \* \* \* \*

Certo mi par grand onta  
Chiamar virtute quel, che spegna 'l bene

E molto mal s'avene  
Cosa bestial preporre a la virtute.

\* \* \* \* \*

Tu potresti qui fare un argomento  
Il Signor nostro molto la commenda,

Guarda, chè ben s'intenda;  
Chè sue parole son molto profonde,

<sup>1</sup> For 'ti dicon.'—R.

E talor' anno dopio intendimento,  
E vuol, chè 'l salutifero si prenda  
Però 'l tuo viso abenda,  
E guarda 'l ver', che dentro vi s'asconde ;  
Tu vedrai, che risponde  
Le sue parole alla sua santa vita ;  
Che podestà compita  
Ebbe de sodisfare a tempo e loco..  
E però 'l suo aver poco  
Fu per noi scampar dulla vita.

\* \* \* \* \*

(*Rumohr, Italienische Forschungen*, ii. 51.)



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